ONCE BOUGHT, ALWAYS BOUGHT.

SHORT STORIES

EDITED BY C. ARTHUR PEARSON (OF PEARSON'S WEEKLY)

No. 317. FOR WEEK ENDING JANUARY 26, 1895. [PRICE ONE PENNY.

1 RISING SUN STOVE POLISH. EASIEST, QUICKEST, CHEAPEST, & BEST BLACKLEAD IN THE WORLD.

N In HALF the TIME with HALF the LABOUR you can produce MORE POLISH with TWO Penny Packets of RISING SUN than with HALF-DOZEN of ordinary Blacklead. B

Sold in ½d., 1d. & 2d. Packets

THREE GREAT BOONS

3 MACK'S DOUBLE STARCH CONTAINS IN PROPER PROPORTIONS GLOSS, BORAX, GUM, WAX, &c. &c.

REQUIRES no addition or preparation. SAVES time, labour, and uncertainty. PRODUCES beautiful white glossy linen. Sold in 1d. Packets, or 3d. and 6d. Boxes.

Sample of any one post free 2 stamps C. Chancellor & Co., London, E.C.

2 RISIN' SUN METAL POLISH. GIVES TO ALL KINDS OF METALS A BEAUTIFUL SOFT BRILLIANT POLISH.

With the MINIMUM of LABOUR this LIQUID POLISH produces a MOST BRILLIANT APPEARANCE, which lasts much longer than that produced by any Paste Polish.

Sold in 1d, 3d, 6d, & 1/- Bottles

100 YEARS' WORLD-WIDE RECORD OF SUCCESS!

NORTON'S CAMOMILE PILLS

INDIGESTION BILIOUSNESS HEADACHE
STOMACH & LIVER COMPLAINTS DEBILITY

The BEST of all TONICS and a GENTLE APERIENT.

Mild in Operation, Perfectly Safe, & Free from Injurious Drugs.

SOLD EVERYWHERE IN BOTTLES AT 1/1½, 2/9, AND 11/- EACH.

Ask for "NORTON'S CAMOMILE PILLS," and do not be persuaded to purchase an imitation.

PREPARED BY NORTON'S, LIMITED, 21, SPITAL SQUARE, LONDON, E.

Trade Mark—One Little Bottle.

THE GREAT COUGH REMEDY

BRONCHONIA

A MARVELLOUS REMEDY for all COUGHS, whether arising from CONSUMPTION, BRONCHITIS, ASTHMA, or THROAT IRRITATIONS.

ITS MARVELLOUS EFFECTS ARE TESTIFIED TO BY EMINENT PHYSICIANS.

2s. 6d., 4s. 6d., & 11s. per Bottle, of all Chemists; or Post Free, 2s. 9d., 4s. 9d., & 11s. 6d., from J. HOWARD, 21, QUEENHITHE, LONDON, E.C.

ONE TRIAL WILL PROVE ITS EFFICACY.

Digitized by Google

BREAKFAST—SUPPER.

EPPS'S

GRATEFUL—COMFORTING.

COCOA

BOILING WATER OR MILK.

Adresse de M. SUEZ, 9, Rue de Prony, PARIS

VINAIGRE LACTÉ de SUEZ POUR LA TOILETTE

EAU de SUEZ

VACCINE for the MOUTH
Strengthens the Gums
Perfumes the Breath
The only Dentifrice securing
BEAUTIFUL TEETH

POUDRE et PATE DENTIFRICES DE SUEZ

London Agents: WILCOX & Co, 239, Oxford Street.

PLUCKY ADVERTISING.

NEW CUSTOMERS ONLY sending a Shilling for Three Ounces of our exquisite "MOSQUE" SMOKING MIXTURE, will be presented free with a Pipe, Rubber Tobacco-Pouch, and a Turkish Amulet. The whole sent in parcel per post on receipt of Twelve Stamps or P.O. Address—

P15, Eureka Manufacturing Co., Clapton, London, N.E.

TO WOMEN. IRREGULARITIES, OBSTRUCTIONS, &c., removed by an ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN Method WITHOUT MEDICINE. No Pills, Mixtures, or Useless Injections. *Greatest Discovery of Modern Medical Science.* Send stamped envelope for particulars, testimonials, &c., to Mrs. SHAFFER-BENNYON, 328, High Holborn, London, W.C.

ONE BOX OF
DR. MACKENZIE'S IMPROVED
HARMLESS ARSENIC WAFERS

will produce the most lovely complexion that the imagination could desire. Clear, Fresh, freed from Blotch, Blemish, Coarseness, Redness, Freckles, or Pimples. Sent post free 4s. 6d.

To whiten the hands and skin, use

Dr. Mackenzie's Arsenical Toilet Soap.

1s. per tablet, 3 for 2s. 6d. Postage, 3d.
S. HARVEY, 12, Gaskarth Road, Balham Hill, London, S.W. *Beware of injurious imitations.*

IMPORTANT ☞ TO LADIES Valuable and never failing remedies for all irregularities and obstructions, however obstinate or long standing, and never fails to bring about the desired result. These really wonderful medicines are without parallel in medical science: they preserve health, and have saved thousands trouble, illness, and expense; heaps of unsolicited testimonials. Send at once stamped envelope for most invaluable particulars. (The only effectual remedy on earth.)

A. DASMAIL
52, LANGDALE, WALTHAMSTOW.
(Established 1851.)

MUCH BETTER THAN STEEL AND PENNYROYAL.

OTTEY'S Unlabelled strong FEMALE PILLS Quickly and Certainly remove all obstructions arising from any cause whatever. Invaluable for married women. Post free, under cover, for 14 and 33 stamps, from—
THOMAS OTTEY, Chemist, Burton-on-Trent.
Please mention this paper.

TO LADIES.

English Wives should send at once for Special Treatise and Price List of Surgical Appliances. Advised by the Medical Faculty throughout the world. Apply, enclosing stamped addressed envelope.—M. D., 217, Graham Road, London, N.E. Please name this paper.

BALDNESS CURED in all its forms. Send stamped addressed envelope for Testimonials Press Criticism, and valuable Pamphlet, containing Chapters on Baldness, Loss of Hair, Greyness, Superfluous Hair &c., with Advice Form for Treatment to Dr. HORN, Hair Specialist, Newport, Isle of Wight.

NEW HARRISON SWIFT GOLD MEDAL.

KNITTER

Knits STOCKINGS (ribbed or plain) GLOVES and CLOTHING in WOOL, SILK, or COTTON. INSTRUCTIONS FREE. Lists free per post. TRIUMPHANT AWARD at PARIS. The only WINNER in the WORLD of 7 GOLD MEDALS and 19 other Honours.
HARRISON KNITTING MACHINE CO., Ltd., Works: 48, Upper Brook St., Manchester.

Exema

and all Skin Eruptions are cured by a Healing Cream widely known as

"Antexema."

"Antexema" is sold by all Chemists and Stores and may be had post free for 1s. 8d., 2s. 9d., and 4s 9d of the ANTEXEMA Co., 83, Castle Road, London, N.W.

Little Book Free. NAME THIS PAPER.

To Tobacconists Commencing.

£20

See Illus. Guide. 259 pp. 3d. "How to open a Cigar Stores from £20 to £1,000." "TOBACCONISTS' Co.," 186, Euston Road, London. Manager — H. Myers. Estab. 1866. *N.B.*—Shopfitters and Show Case Makers for all trades.
ESTIMATES FREE.

INDIA RUBBER STAMPS.

For heading Notepaper, endorsing Envelopes, Cheques, and Postal Cards, Marking Linen, etc. Monograms two letters 1s. each; three letters, 1s. 6d. each, full name in neat type, 1s. 4d each. Postage, 3d. Self-inkers, from 2s. each.

Pattern and Price Lists post free.

Stamps are on brass mounts with black handles.

JOHN BERKLEY,
8, Livery Street, Birmingham.

"WORTH A GUINEA A BOX."

BEECHAM'S PILLS

FOR ALL

BILIOUS & NERVOUS DISORDERS,

SUCH AS

Sick Headache, Constipation,
Weak Stomach, Impaired Digestion,
Disordered Liver, & Female Ailments.

ANNUAL SALE SIX MILLION BOXES.

In Boxes, 9½d., 1s. 1½d., and 2s. 9d. each, with full directions.

Prepared only by the Proprietor,

THOMAS BEECHAM, St. Helens, Lancashire.

Sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere.

SEVEN PRIZE MEDALS.

These series of pens neither scratch nor spurt. They glide over the roughest paper with the ease of a soft lead pencil. A 6d. assorted sample box of any stationer.

BORD'S PIANOS

ON SALE, with 25 per cent. Discount for Cash, or 14s. 6d. per month (Second-hand 10s. 6d. per month) on the three years' system.—Lists Free of C. STILES and CO., 40 and 42, Southampton-row, Holborn, London. Pianos Exchanged.

A Real Boon to Ladies.

TO LADIES Especially to those who wish to know of a safe, certain, and speedy remedy for all irregularities and obstructions, a remedy which, under the most trying circumstances and in the most difficult and
OBSTINATE CASES,
NEVER FAILS TO AFFORD
RELIEF,
GENERALLY IN A FEW HOURS.

No case hopeless, failure is simply impossible, as Mrs. Snow, of Denmark Hill, Camberwell, writes:—

"By adopting your treatment my anxiety and misery was over within twenty-four hours, although I had been daily taking pills and other things in vain. Half the quantity you sent proved effective, to my intense joy and surprise."

A sworn guarantee is enclosed with all testimonials and medicine, which is inexpensive, as one bottle at 4s. 6d. (by post, 4s. 9d.) is usually sufficient for any case.

Full particulars will be gladly forwarded to any lady on receipt of addressed envelope.

Write privately to—
Mrs. P. S. S.,
145, STOCKWELL ROAD,
LONDON, S.W.

TOWLE'S PENNYROYAL & STEEL PILLS FOR FEMALES.

QUICKLY CORRECT ALL IRREGULARITIES, REMOVE ALL OBSTRUCTIONS and RELIEVE the distressing SYMPTOMS so prevalent with the sex. Boxes 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. (the latter size contains three times the quantity), of all Chemists, or will be sent anywhere on receipt of 15 or 34 stamps, by the maker,

E. T. TOWLE, Chemist, NOTTINGHAM.
Beware of Imitations injurious and worthless.

A BOON TO LADIES

Collins' Marvellous Female Remedy.

Mr. COLLINS [who was 30 years a member of the Royal College of Surgeons of England], will forward free of Charge, full PARTICULARS of a REMEDY, which during an extensive practice both at home and in the Colonies he has never known to fail in the most OBSTINATE CASES of OBSTRUCTION and IRREGULARITIES. Send addressed envelope for full particulars, and waste no more time and money on useless Pills and so-called Remedies, &c., which, in the majority of cases, are nothing but PURGATIVES, and cause SICKNESS, PROSTRATION, and PAIN, without having the desired effect.

Letters to be addressed—
D. COLLINS,
GOTHIC HOUSE, 9, ERSKINE STREET, LIVERPOOL.

MADAME FRAIN'S FAMOUS FEMALE MIXTURE.

The most powerful and effective on earth.

For the most obstinate cases. Will not injure the most delicate. Price 7s. 6d. (Strongest, 11s. per bottle); post free, 6d. extra. HERBAL INSTITUTE, 1a, Hackney Road (opposite Shoreditch Church), London, N.E. Send at once stamped directed envelope for particulars and proofs. I will forfeit £100 for every testimonial that is not genuine, and they can be seen at any time.

Sold also by all Chemists.

SEAMLESS

STOCKINET

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES.

EDITED BY C. ARTHUR PEARSON.

No. 317.] *FOR THE WEEK ENDING JANUARY 26, 1895.* [PRICE ONE PENNY.

The Incident of Rataplan

THE proverbially inconvenient third was Rataplan, the cat. He was worshipped by Mrs. Jack Vane, and—with a considerable discount—also by her husband. Perhaps it is more exact to say that Mr. Vane adored his wife, and for her sake tolerated the pampered and unlovely cat, named Rataplan, because of his long, loud, rather stertorous purr, like the roll of a drum.

They were at breakfast. Mrs. Vane was delicious in a gown of pale blue surah silk, rippling with laces. Mr. Vane was in partial eclipse behind a newspaper. Rataplan sat erect and decorous in his high chair, with his paw upon the table. He was a Persian cat, fantastically striped in shades of yellow, very corpulent, with distended cheeks. His round eyes had the colour of pale sherry. His countenance was babylike, with intermittent gleams of viciousness. He had eaten his saucer of cake and cream, and was not interested in the leading article which Mr. Vane read aloud.

"The Japanese are advancing——"

Just then Rataplan made a leap upon the table, seized a fowl from the dish before his master, and carried it, utilising Mr. Vane's knees on his way to the floor. A broiled bird does not, however, traverse a surface of cloth without leaving traces behind.

"Confound the cat!" Mr. Vane flapped with his napkin at Rataplan, who retreated under the sideboard with his booty.

"Oh, poor Rataplan, we didn't notice that he wanted something!"

"I tell you, Linda, that he ought not to be permitted to come to table. That cat is a nuisance; I wish he was in Siberia!"

She pressed a handkerchief to her eyes, rather ostentatiously. "You—you—promised that you would be fond of Rataplan!"

"I didn't vow to love, honour, and cherish that absurd cat. Only yourself, my dear Linda. But I have endeavoured to like him. Up to date I have managed to endure him—the scratching, biting, greedy animal. But I draw the line at his table manners of this morning!"

Rataplan, under the sideboard, was growling, as he crunched the bones of the fowl.

"If you will excuse me, Linda, I will leave you now, and get into some other clothes." He glanced at his watch. "I'm a little behind time already. That cat must go."

Mr. Vane went to his dressing-room. Linda remained a moment in resentful surprise, motionless. Then she went to fling herself dramatically on her knees in front of the sideboard. "My poor Rataplan, what a brute Jack is!"

She would have clasped the cat in her arms, to console him, misunderstood, maligned. But he had thoroughly anointed himself in devouring the bird; and she—even in that poignant moment—was restrained by the fear of ruining her silken dream of a gown. "Poor Rataplan!" she repeated.

Then she rose to her feet, and hastened to her "own dear little den," where she indulged in flattering misery as a martyred wife, a modern *édition de luxe* of Patient Griselda.

Reclothed and in his right mind—that is to say without rancour against the cat, who after all, had not meant to harm the trousers, only to help himself to more breakfast—Mr. Vane hurried to his office. The misadventure had lost him a quarter of an hour. In his haste, he omitted to look for his wife, to make their usual affectionate good-bye.

. . . . . .

An hour later, a stylish brougham with a pair of disdainful-stepping horses, driven by an elderly coachman, who resembled the benevolent uncle in a French comedy—drove into Broad Street and stopped at the office of Mr. Samuel W. Sands, banker and broker. From the carriage issued a young woman, dressed all in black, with here and there discreet glimmers of jet—the very costume of modish tragedy. The skirt, demi-train, sweeping sharply, like the wing of a swallow, defined her form, very slender and lithe. Having entered the door, with an agitated step she went straight past the admiring *personnel* of the banking house to the private office, where Mr. Sands held certain councils that affected the financial barometer of the nation. At the moment he was there alone. His fine grey head was bent over the morning's correspondence.

The young woman entered without knocking, and threw herself on the neck of the banker.

"Papa, dear, I've left Jack, and you must take me home to keep house for you?"

"Heaven forbid!" (The pious ejaculation may have concerned his daughter's proposed separation from her husband, or her assumption of the cares of the paternal household.) "What new caprice is this, Linda?"

For, during the intermediate years between Linda's graduation at boarding-school and her marriage day—those years were

All Rights Reserved.

Digitized by Google

few—Mr. Sands had often found her unaccountable. "If her mother could have lived," he would sigh, within himself.

"It is not all caprice," asserted Linda, with dignity. "My self-respect requires me to leave him, and to ask you to obtain for me a formal separation from him. He is just simply too hateful!"

"Let us judge. What has he done? Has he been flirting?"

"Oh, no. He is so absurdly devoted in public that he doesn't even leave me time to—talk with my old friends."

"Did he strike you, then?"

"What an idea! He couldn't. Jack is a perfect gentleman, always—at least—that is—except this morning."

"He threatened you, perhaps?"

"No—not precisely. That is, not me, but Rataplan, dear little Rataplan."

"The cat?"

"Don't call him just a cat, papa. To me Rataplan is a person like anybody else."

"Then, as I gather, Vane has been guilty of unparliamentary language to Monsieur Rataplan, whose eniment personality I am happy to recognise."

"You can laugh, of course, papa. But for me, it is all very serious. I've left Jack—do you hear? I've left Jack!" Her voice ran up into a little shriek.

"How long since?"

"About half an hour ago. After he went down to the office."

"Then he does not know it."

"Not yet."

"Listen to your old father, who counsels you never to let him know it! You are young; and imagine time to be endless, secure from misfortune. Disputes appear to you piquant little thorns upon a rose that otherwise might be too sweet. Linda, it was twenty years ago that your mother and I had a quarrel. It was about a trifle; it lasted only an hour. But that was an hour lost from the few years that we were together. I never could find that hour again."

They were at breakfast.

"But this is quite different, papa. It is not a quarrel. It is only that I have discovered Jack as he really is—ill-tempered and cruel."

"What did he do?" repeated the father. In truth he was not anxious to hear, for he was sure that the grievance was of the slightest. But he needed a moment's time to replace a sad memory in a remote pigeon-hole of his mind, behind a great heap of financial cares.

"He said, 'Confound that cat!' I didn't mind that so much—of course it was dreadfully profane—but I hope that I can make allowance for his frightful state of excitement. But he also said, 'That cat must go.' And he meant it. To call darling Rataplan 'That cat!' It was worse than swearing."

"Aggravated treason, indeed! He ought to be fined for contempt of cat! Now let us hear both sides. What had M. Rataplan done to suggest—mind, I do not say to merit—such treatment?"

"Nothing at all. He had helped himself to a fowl from the table at breakfast. Dear, sweet little fellow! He sat there in his high chair, so good! And we—it was our fault—paid no attention to him. Jack was reading about the war in Corea. Poor Rataplan had eaten his cake and lapped the very last drop of cream. His saucer was perfectly empty. Then the darling leaped on the table—you know how gracefully he springs—and caught the bird in his dear little mouth, and—wasn't it sweet of him, when Jack was going to be so horrid about him?—he jumped down on Jack's knee, and then to the floor. And Jack was furious with Rataplan, only because the broiled bird left some marks on his trousers!"

"He ought to have blamed the fowl. But I admit that my condolences are for the trousers. Jack always wears admirable clothes."

"Papa, you do not try to understand me. You never did. It isn't altogether for Rataplan's sake—but, you see, I cannot possibly live with a man of Jack's violent temper. Why, it isn't safe. Some day he might say, 'Confound Linda! That woman must go.' Take me home with you, papa dear. I'll manage your house beautifully. We will dismiss Mrs. Lamb—you don't want that antiquated housekeeper when you can have me. I will do the marketing myself—I know what you like. And I won't be much expense to you for gowns and bonnets and jewels. Dear papa, let me go home with you."

"Of course there is always a place for you in my house, Linda," said Mr. Sands, temporising.

"And for Rataplan?"

"Well, yes, I think we might manage to make room for him—at any rate, there would be the cellar and the area."

"Papa!"

"We will discuss that later. At present I advise you to go to your house as if nothing had happened. You will merely have been shopping. In case you have not your purse with you, here are twenty pounds. You can, with that sum, buy enough gloves and handkerchiefs to justify your excursion in the eyes of your maid. Now go, make your little purchases, and be tranquil. Above all, do not chatter to your maid. I will come to take you ——"

"And Rataplan?"

"And Rataplan, at five-thirty. Vane does not come home before six. We shall be in time. Meanwhile, amuse yourself in some way. For instance, you might write Jack a letter of farewell. Make it as tragic as you please—and then, if you are a sensible girl, you'll burn it. Dead letters tell no tales. Ashes are impressive and compromise nobody, even if they are left lying about loose. Or better still, pack up your belongings for removal. That will occupy you all day, and be safer than scribbling. That's all, is it? Well, good-bye, my dear." Mr. Sands received his daughter's kiss, and then turned again to his correspondence.

Linda went away. She wondered at herself—the heroine of a domestic drama—for the interest with which she began to plan her little expenditures. Still, there is not a little fun to be extracted from even twenty pounds, if one limits herself strictly to trifles. Among other things, she would buy a new collar for Rataplan.

When Mrs. Vane arrived at her house, Céline—a real pearl of a Frenchwoman—who had heard everything from the footman, displayed a manner exaggeratedly usual, as she carried the armful of little parcels upstairs.

Digitized by Google

Meanwhile, ten minutes after Linda left her father's office, there was a tap at his door. "Come in!"

Enter Jack Vane.

"It fairly rains relatives this morning," thought Mr. Sands within himself.

"I ran in for a minute, sir, to talk with you——"

"Of course. Don't be disturbed, Jack. It will all come out right, I hope."

"Right, sir! More than right, I should say! Why, sugar preferred is just jumping up from point to point, and my only question is how soon to sell?"

"Oh, sugar preferred!"

"There's nothing else thought about, to-day, sir."

Here was a cheerful and oblivious culprit! Absolutely, he had not an idea beyond sugar quotations! Mr. Sands looked duly serious.

"I supposed that you had come to talk about your quarrel with Linda. I do not conceal from you that she has been here already."

"But I have no quarrel with Linda. What does this mean?"

"Does the name of Rataplan enlighten you?"

"That ridiculous cat to which she offers so much incense. Yes, I admit that when she calls him her precious angel, and kisses his puffy cheeks and his treacherous claws—he scratched her pretty upper lip yesterday, by way of appreciation—I am considerably disgusted with the pampered fraud. Certainly, I'm jealous of her devotion to the cat—and yet, I too, have my innings, I may say. By-the-way, did she tell you that the beast spoiled my trousers this morning by dragging a broiled bird over my knees."

"She said something of the sort. But she coloured the fact with the iris tints of affection—for the cat. I must warn you, indeed, that Linda came to insist on a separation from you, and an immediate return to my house."

"Good gracious, sir! I had no idea that she had taken serious offence. Of course she did not like to hear me blame Rataplan. But my language about the spoiled trousers was very moderate—compared with the tailor's charge for them!"

"I advised her to return to your house, not talk about the difficulty, but await my coming for her at five-thirty. Luckily, it occurred to me to give her a few pounds for ribbons and things. Probably she is in some shop now, feeling much better."

"But I am distressed beyond measure. What can I do?"

"Isn't there perhaps some delicate attention that you can pay ——"

"To her! I should say! A new bracelet ——"

"No, no. Not to her. To that hideous, ill-tempered, chuckle-headed, yellow Egyptian idol of a rival of yours."

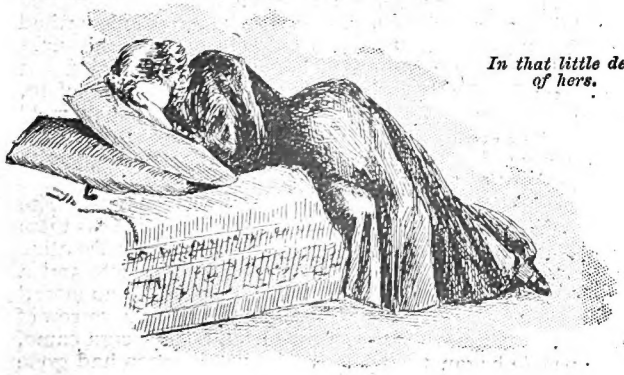
Vane meditated for a moment.

"Rataplan, I am told, is always served with sponge-cake and cream at five o'clock. I shall have the honour to hand it to Monsieur."

"An inspiration! Only be punctual, for, as I said, I shall come to free my daughter from domestic tyranny at five-thirty sharp."

They shook hands.

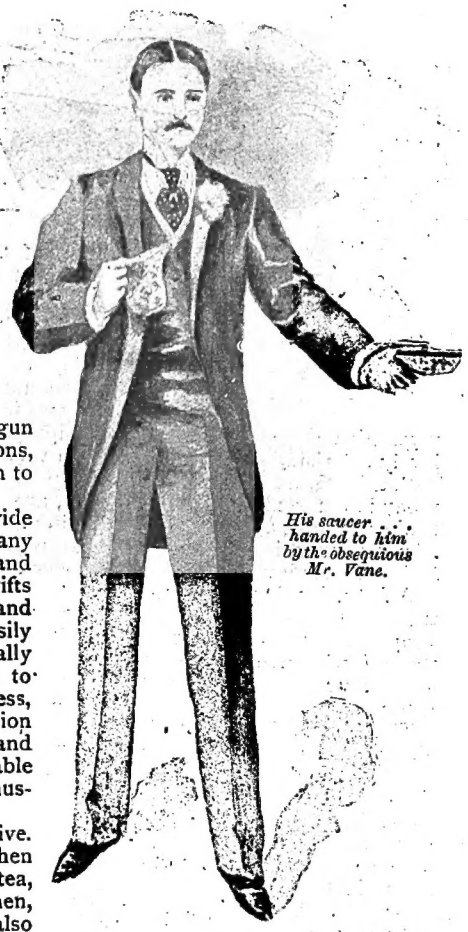
"Don't sell under 112¼, Jack. Good luck to you, all along the line, my son."



In that little den of hers.

In that little den of hers, all pale green hangings embroidered with falling pink roses, furnished in rococo gold-and-white—Linda Vane began to feel the reaction of the dream of the morning. She had told Céline that she would receive no visits; she wished to be undisturbed, for she was tired with the early shopping. Left alone, she had begun to collect her possessions, in order to take them to her father's house.

But her fantastic pride forbade her to carry any gifts of that cruel husband of hers—and his gifts were quite too many and too beautiful to be easily left behind. Gradually the situation appeared to her in its seriousness, first as the renunciation of the costly signs, and then of the inestimable substance of her husband's affection.



His saucer handed to him by the obsequious Mr. Vane.

The clock struck five. That was the hour when she usually made tea, amid half a dozen women, her intimates. It was also the time for Rataplan to have his cream and cake. It appeared to Linda quite frightful, her apathy about five o'clock tea.

The door of the other room creaked very slightly. How tiresome of Céline, when she had been told that her mistress wished not to be disturbed. Rataplan awoke, aroused, stretched himself, uttered an epicurean mi'aoe. For he beheld his saucer, full of his favourite dainty, handed to him by the obsequious Mr. Vane, who knelt before the sofa.

Linda, with a flying swirl of the long gown—assumed as the appropriate decoration of her proud and tragic mood of the morning—ran towards her husband, and suddenly bending, encircled his neck with her arms. The cream was spilled on the carpet. Rataplan, not to be a loser, jumped down and began to lap at it greedily.

"Oh, Jack! You don't hate us!"

"I love you, and I offer an amnesty to Rataplan."

He seated her upon the sofa and placed himself beside her.

Just then Rataplan, having finished the cream, sprang up, reposing his sphinx-like form on Jack's knees, while his fore-paws lay on Linda's gown.

"You can't go away from me, my dear girl. 'Blest be the tie that binds'—even if it is Rataplan!"

The door opened. Mr. Sands entered the room.

His countenance had assumed an expression of *père noble*, which he hoped would suit his daughter's idea of the requirements of the situation.

Jack arose quickly to his feet. Rataplan deprived of support, clutched with his hooked claws in Linda's skirt.

"Now this is good of you, sir! You have invited yourself to dine with us this evening, I hope." Jack's pleasure was unmistakable.

Also Linda ran towards her father. "Dear papa, I am so glad to see you—Oh! look at my gown. All torn by those horrid paws! What a nuisance Rataplan is! Really Jack, that cat must go."

Digitized by Google

THE TREASURE OF THE TEMPLE

WHERE the waters of the Gulf of Mexico mingle with those of the Caribbean Sea, only a few miles from the headland of Yucatan, lies the island of Cozumel. It is a narrow, long strip of land, with white coral cliffs rising out of the transparent sea. Lofty cocoanut palms wave their feathery fronds over it, a luxurious tropical vegetation covers it, and as the ships pass by they see this lovely isle rising out of the waters, a very pearl.

But, lovely as Cozumel is, to-day man can find but little to repay him for making it his abode, and only a few scattered fishing villages show it to be inhabited. But, desolate as the island is now, it once boasted a large population in the days before Cortez invaded Mexico the lovely.

A few ruins, long decayed, show the hand of the builder of those days, and many are the tales that are current among the simple fishermen about these ruins and their days. One of these I will give you, as an old Santa Cruz Indian, whose guest I was during the few days I spent on Cozumel, related it to me.

The Spaniard had invaded Yucatan, and his settlements along the coast had flourished. Many were the merchant ships that anchored in the Bay of Campeche, carrying thence costly timber and valuable drugs and spices. But while they carried these things away, they brought many undesirable things, and worst among those were the adventurers and outcasts, who here sought to amass fortunes by whatsoever way was most convenient.

These were the days when rich and prosperous Yucatan was the scene of constant bloodshed, when the peaceful Indians were compelled to retreat further and further into the primeval forest, into which even the reckless and greedy Spaniards dare not follow them.

But while the Spaniard dared not the smallpox did, and many a district, once teeming with human life, became vast silent, impenetrable tombs. While these events were taking place on the western side, the eastern front of the Peninsula was comparatively little visited by the invaders, largely due to the fact that it possessed no harbours.

One day in September, 1672, there shot round the little headland of Yucatan a small canoe, in which were seated two men, who, the first glance showed, were Spaniards. The little boat rapidly rowed along, and evinced a skilful hand at the oars; gracefully it rode the waves, until, just as the sun was setting, a rapid stroke of the oar caused it to turn sharply, and another stroke sent it flying high and dry on the beach.

Both of the boat's occupants quickly sprang out and pulled the boat far up on the white sand of which the shore was composed. One of them was a tall, broad-shouldered young man, whose bronzed open face betokened resolution, tempered by good-natured honesty. The other was a dark, swarthy, evil-looking individual, whose size contrasted as much with that of the other as his treacherous, plotting countenance did with the manly frankness of his companion.

As soon as the boat was made fast, the smaller, with a hasty glance at the bushes which fringed the shore a short distance from where they were standing, turned to his companion.

"Where is that lazy Indian?" he exclaimed. "Here we are, just to time, and not a sign of him. I tell you, Rodrigo," here a fearfully malevolent look came into his eyes, "if he shows us that treasure, why,"—here he made a motion as if stabbing someone—"if not, I'll tear his heart out."

"You'll have to postpone your killing this time, Diego, as I see no need of it. While he's with me, I will give you two to deal with instead of one, so you had better take warning."

The one addressed as Diego cast the speaker a sidelong glance full of venom; then turning, muttered, "We'll see," and once more speaking to the bushes said, "Where's the Indian?" At that moment a small wiry figure stepped into the open space.

"Here, señor. Coatzli never fails to be in time," and in confirmation he pointed seaward, where the moon's pale disk was just showing a narrow rim above the horizon.

"Diego," laughingly added the one called Rodrigo, "he's right; there's Bella Luna just pushed her head out."

The two Spaniards pushed the boat off. While they were thus employed Coatzli prostrated himself and remained for a moment in the attitude of prayer; then, jumping up, he took his seat in the boat, and silently the three rowed across the fast receding waves towards the long dark line—Cozumel.

The Indian, who was seated in the stern of the boat, directed every stroke as they glided noiselessly along the shore, until they had gone nearly half the length of the island.

"Do you see those three palms?" he at last spoke up. "There is our destination."

A moment later the boat was moored to a huge cocoa-nut palm, whose white trunk leaned far across the waters, and the trio had landed.

In advance, with quick active strides, walked the Indian.

Not a word escaped from any of the three. They were traversing an old road, fringed on both sides by dense bush, lined at regular intervals with gigantic palms. Before them, half hidden among the fronds of innumerable palms, loomed up a massive pile.

"The trocalli (temple)," said the Indian, pointing at it.

While he was speaking, the narrow road, along which they had come so far, suddenly widened out and opened on a grove of palms, extending right and left, as far as the eye could reach. Before them was a truncated pyramid, up which, on all four sides, ran a broad stairway, occupying fully a third of each face.

At one time, this stairway must have been grand. Now it was in ruins. Whole blocks had fallen out and many were mutilated. Few had escaped the hand of time.

Up this stair opening before them ascended Coatzli, followed by the Spaniards. When he had nearly reached the summit, Coatzli halted. When the others had reached the place beside him, he stretched out his hand:

"Once this was the temple where my fathers worshipped. Yonder grove was planted by one of my ancestors. The road we have come was the work of another. From the waters of the east to those of the west they ruled—a peaceful, happy people. But one day the sun hid her face, and the sacrifices offered did not propitiate her. Anxiously the people waited fasting from the dawn to the setting of the sun. Still no sun.

"Then it was that Tepetlatl, the aged priest, cried out warningly: 'The day is at hand, the day so long told before, when the mighty shall fall and the strong shall be weakened! Lo! a fish shall come out of the sea, yet not a fish, and it shall seek to devour, for Tonatiuh, the mighty sun, is angry with his people.

"'They shall cry in vain, but he heareth them not. The destroyer shall be upon them, and he shall sorely press them down. They shall be oppressed night and day, but Tonatiuh shall not hear their cry; for a mightier shall be here and a stronger shall rule, and his people shall see his face no more.'

"Thus spoke Tepetlatl the Seer, and great was the sorrow of his people. Six times the moon rolled on, but no sign came, and the people began to hope. The seventh moon had gone

Digitized by Google

when there came from the east a big black monster. It had a body like a fish, yet it was no fish; it had wings like a bird, yet no bird ever was like unto it. As it drew nearer it paused, and a small fish came out of its mouth and our god trembled and fell. And as he fell the little fish climbed the beach, all of his legs drawn in, and it had many men in it, and they were white. And then we saw that the little fish was a boat, many times larger than the canoes of our people.

"And thus it came that the white man took this land, and that this temple no longer holds our god; and time has dealt hard with the sacred hill. But when the white man came he found no treasure, for Tepetlatl the Seer had hidden it far down beneath the temple. It is mine, and soon it will be yours, for Coatzli, the last Cacique of Cozumel, needs it not. When he is gone there will be no Coatzlitos to carry the secret on down the generations to come, for Coatzli will be the last of his race."

Here he paused a moment, while his frame shook with suppressed emotion. A vague undefinable feeling of mingled awe and dread had taken possession of his hearers. As they listened to his wild pathetic tale, to the prophetic, sad, yet firm tone in which he recited it, they could not shake off a momentary fear that took possession of them. And while the palm fronds rustled in the night breeze, and seemed to whisper to each other tales that no man had yet heard, Coatzli continued: "The hour has come, and Tonatiuh calls. Let us go!"

He climbed the few remaining stairs to the top, and silently pointed to the east. They saw stretched out beyond the silvery mirror of the Caribbean Sea, that beautifully treacherous water. They were standing on a small platform long overgrown by weeds and creepers.

While they were still gazing at the panorama stretched out before them, Coatzli had scraped away the vegetation around one of the blocks composing the platform, disclosing a handle of stone seemingly chiselled right out of the solid rock. Kneeling a moment, with his hands stretched out to the moon, he seized the ring, gave it one wrench, and lifted a slab which covered a small opening. Looking into the aperture, they beheld a stone stair descending into the darkness.

Bidding the others to follow him closely, Coatzli descended. Before he had gone far, he paused for a moment. Drawing forth flint and steel, he struck fire and ignited a torch, which he held in his hand. By the light thus produced, the others saw a small shelf hewn out of the stone composing the roof, and stored away upon it a number of torches. Bidding each to light one, and take a few spare ones, he continued to descend.

Step after step they descended, on a stair seemingly without bend or waver—down, down. They had gone thus far when the stair suddenly took a sharp turn to the right, and continued, at a considerably lesser angle. A dull booming sound now became audible, increasing in volume each step they descended.

Rodrigo, who followed immediately after the Indian, felt a drop of water upon his hand. On inquiry he learnt that the sound was from the sea, which was rolling in breakers overhead. He could not suppress a shudder; the stairway beginning almost in the centre of the island, had continued under the sea.

But rapidly their guide pushed on, and soon the sound became fainter and fainter. But now another sound struck their ear. A faint, gurgling, swishing noise, as of a brook rushing over pebbles and tumbling over rocks.

Suddenly Coatzli spoke: "We are near the foot of the stair. From now watch closely every move I make, and instantly do the same. Obey every command that I give as a false step henceforward may be disastrous."

While he yet spoke they had emerged upon a platform, and now the sound was clearly audible. Enjoining perfect silence, Coatzli slowly advanced. A few steps and he paused on a narrow ledge. Before him rolled a mighty river, hissing and plunging with incredible velocity! "Rio muerto (the river of the dead)," said Coatzli, pointing to the waters before him. "When the white men oppressed Tepetlatl and his people, he and 200 of the nobles sought and found their death in its waters. Look yonder! there they found a resting place!" And the horror-struck Spaniards, following with their eyes where he pointed, saw the mighty underground river plunge headlong into an abyss, not twenty yards from where they were standing!

Turning sharply in the opposite direction Coatzli led the way along a ledge so narrow that two could scarcely walk abreast. Walking along thus, with the river plunging on at their side, they proceeded for some time in silence. Again Coatzli stopped. There, before them, a straight wall rose up, stopping further progress in that direction.

At their right was the rock wall, which they had followed so far; at their left the river. But already Coatzli has solved the riddle. Pointing to a plank which extended from the bank where they were standing into the darkness beyond, he briefly said: "We must cross this."

Before the Spaniards had grasped the full meaning of his word, he was already half way across! Nothing remained but to follow. Crossing on the narrow plank, scarcely wide enough to admit of both feet being planted on it side by side, swaying under the weight of the three men, the river plunging madly beneath, and the almost palpable darkness before, made only more dense by the lurid light cast by the torches, was indeed a task that tested the nerves.

When they had safely passed over they found themselves in a vaulted passage, whose sides were curiously honeycombed.

"The burying place of the Caciques," said Coatzli; "those openings are the tombs of my ancestors."

While he spoke a curious, horrifying, undefinable sound as of thousands of cords dragging through the dust, became audible. Louder and louder it grew; it seemed to come from all sides, and now there mingled with it a blood-curdling sound, a loud angry rattling.

The tombs were alive with rattlesnakes!

And as snake after snake glided into the path, Coatzli spoke: "Welcome, ye spirits of my ancestors; ye come to behold the last of your royal race, now soon no more."

And then he did a strange thing. While his companions stood petrified with horror, he stepped into the midst of the serpents, and drawing forth a small silver flute began to play! Sad, mournful were the notes—a wild, strange dirge; and while he played a strange commotion came over the snakes, and slowly they began untwisting the strange heap, and, coiling themselves with their heads and necks extended in the air, they swayed to and fro in unison with the music.

Quicker and quicker came the notes, sharp and piercing rang the wild melody through the hall, and quicker and quicker swayed the heads to and fro, to and fro. Long it had lost the character of a dirge, it became a march, then a battle song; now it seemed to portray the fierce conflict, man to man, hand to hand. Faster and faster came the music, fiercer and fiercer sounded the strain; and faster and faster swayed the heads, fiercer and fiercer came the rattle.

Suddenly, the player paused, and every head rigidly protruded from the coils. A moment, and every snake slowly uncoiled itself and by their motions accompaning the music, which had again commenced so sad, so mournful, they retreated to their dens. When the last had disappeared, Coatzli ceased, ending with what sounded like the piercing, heartrending cry of agony.

During the whole time both Spaniards stood unable to move, fear and horror held them motionless in their grasp, and when, at the conclusion of the strange, horrible, and awful performance Coatzli, turning to them, said, "Let us proceed," it was fully a minute ere they had regained sufficient control over themselves to comply.

Passing along over the ground so shortly before occupied by a horde of rattlesnakes, not without a shudder and a fearful glance at the openings at either side, they soon gained a turn, where the passage widened sufficiently to permit them to walk together. They had gone but a few steps when the passage ended before a rudely hewn wall of solid rock. Fixing his torch into a crevice of the rock Coatzli said:

"This is the place."

"How can we get into the treasure chamber?" inquired Rodrigo.

"Wait and see," was the answer.

While yet they were talking, the Indian prostrated himself in

Digitized by Google

the attitude of prayer. Before he had concluded a portion of the wall disappeared.

And to their astonished gaze was presented a small circular niche or room, hewn out of the solid rock, and filled with silver and gold cups, plates, idols, and vases, all of solid silver and gold. On one side were several jars of stone, which proved to be filled with bars and nuggets of gold.

Rodrigo stood before the entrance, amazed and dazzled, half afraid to enter, but Diego rushed into the chamber, scarcely able to contain himself with joy. Then, when he had satisfied himself that these things were indeed silver and gold, he drew his stiletto and, before the astonished Rodrigo could interfere, or even comprehend his fiendish intention, plunged it to the hilt in Coatzli's back.

The Indian staggered against the portal. Rodrigo, who attempted to rush to his rescue, was motioned back by the Indian, who, supporting himself against the entrance, turned upon his assailant a look of such withering scorn as made the wretch before him tremble. Then, dragging himself across the portal, he seized in one hand a heavy gold idol, representing the sun, and flinging it out into the hallway beyond, with the other threw the silver flute to Rodrigo.

While he was thus employed, while the blood was streaming down his back, both Spaniards, the one within the other without, were, as if spellbound, unable to move. Then Coatzli, facing Diego, spoke: "The last Cacique is indeed dying—soon he will be with his fathers. When they ask who slew me the murderer will be there, too." And before either could comprehend his intention, Coatzli staggered along the wall, fell, and the huge block forming the entrance reappeared as mysteriously as it had departed, and Diego was buried alive!

Rodrigo, as soon as he could collect his confused thoughts, comprehending at last what it meant, rushed forward just as the ponderous block slid back, but a commanding gesture from Coatzli waved him back.

"Go, you cannot save him. He dug his own grave and ——"

His words became inaudible.

Rodrigo, casting one glance at the gold before him, fled horror-stricken. How he got out he could never tell, but when he returned to San Christoval his health was broken, and he died a few years later.

Long since the pyramid has been demolished, but the treasure, the Indians say, no man can find, as two spirits—Diego and Coatzli—watch over it, and contend with any mortal who dares to seek it.

THE RIVALS.

THE sun was setting. In the shadow of Mount Ophir, almost under its rugged summit, we made camp. We had steamed some forty miles up the river Muar that day, shooting crocodiles from one of the Sultan's river launches, and at twilight my companion, Inchi Mohammed, the Tuan Hakim or Chief Justice of Muar, proposed that we stop for the night, and have a grand pig-hunt in the morning.

The messenger that was sent by a tortuous jungle path to the nearest Malay campong or village, with orders for the punghulo, or chief, to send a hundred beaters on the morrow, returned, accompanied by an escort of Malays, who begged that their Excellencies, the Tuan Hakim and the Tuan Consul, would honour the punghulo by being present at the marriage feast of his daughter, which was to occur that night.

Only too glad of a little diversion, and of a chance to get a peep into the mysteries of a Malayan wedding ceremony, I accepted with profuse thanks, and we followed our guides along an old elephant track that led through a jungle impenetrable to the eye.

The glare of the torches lit up the dense, black network of rubber vines and rattans, and exposed clusters of great elkhorn ferns and hanging orchids. The interlacing trees on either side formed a perfect arch, and gave our course the appearance of a tunnel. We stumbled from pitfall to pitfall, made by the countless footsteps of elephants, and our ejaculations of annoyance set colonies of monkeys to chattering in the black obscurity of the branches.

Long before the lights of the fires reached us from the campong, our ears were saluted with the deep, sonorous boom of the great wooden gongs, and the shriller reverberations of smaller ones of crocodile hide, telling us that the festivities were in progress.

The old punghulo met us at the edge of the clearing with many deep salaams and a stream of complimentary Malay. He was dressed, as were all his followers, in a neat silken *sarong*, in honour of the occasion, red sandals, and a light silken *baju*, or jacket. He alone was distinguished by a rimless cap, in the front of which were the arms of Johore set in brilliants.

Our appearance created a sensation. A party of half-naked youngsters, who were engaged in cock-fighting, before a great fire, crowded close up to us, and exchanged a respectful "*Tabek*, Tuan Hakim" with the Chief Justice. The older men, who had been sagely discussing the doings of their little world, and the present rebellion of the redoubtable Panglima Muda in the neighbouring State of Pahang, essayed to shake our hands. Even the women, who were engaged in filing the bride elect's teeth, and painting the palms of her hands and the nails of her fingers and toes red, with henna, could not resist the opportunity of coming out and saluting the head of their Courts.

Among the last to come forward was the prospective bridegroom, a small, over-dressed young man, with a hard, cruel face. His features lacked the open, kindly expression which is the chief beauty of his race. I did not like his half-servile, half-arrogant air, and mentioned my dislike to my companion.

The Chief Justice shrugged his shoulders.

"Allah is allwise!"

The old punghulo seemed unusually proud of his son-in-law that was to be, and told us over and over again that he was a sergeant in His Highness's Artillery at Bander Maharani, and that he had paid him for his daughter's hand ten slabs of tin, a hundred piculs of rice, and a kris with a gold-covered sheath.

We followed the happy old man up the rickety ladder that led into his bungalow. Its open bamboo floor was covered with beautifully woven mats of wiry lallang grass, and its palm-thatched sides were hung with gaily coloured draperies of native manufacture.

At one end, seated on a low platform, surrounded by her women, was the bride, dressed in a silken sarong, which was held in place at the waist by a zone of silver. Her kabaya, of the finest material, was fastened down the front with golden brooches. Her lace head-scarf was thrown about her shoulders, leaving uncovered her luxuriant black hair, which was twisted up on her head, and stuck full of gold pins, and a spray of sweet smelling chumpaka flower.

She was comely, almost handsome, in spite of her swollen gums, blackened teeth, and syrah-stained lips. Her round, plump, sweet little face shone out from its barbaric surroundings with a piquant individuality that attracted us at once.

She smiled graciously when her father told her of the

Digitized by Google

honour we were doing her, but I thought I detected a gesture of disgust when the bridegroom came forward, and, for the first time, claimed the privilege of tasting the betel nut that she was chewing. She handed it to him with an averted face, not deigning to notice his look of rapture as he placed it in his mouth.

Her women crowded about her, and whispered their wish that her lord might take his seat beside her while we were there to witness.

She inclined her head in assent, while an angry spot of red came into either brown cheek.

As he stepped up on the daïs, amid the cry of "*Suka! suka!*" ("We wish it! we wish it!"), a full-grown Malayan tiger, with a low, cat-like snarl, pushed out from behind her chair. I stood looking at the intruder with flashing eyes. His lithe, yellow body was drawn back as though to spring.

Instinctively I put my hand on the butt of my revolver in anticipation of an attack.

The cries of "*Suka!*" commenced again.

"*Lepas*, Murad," said the girl sternly, and the savage beast crouched softly at her feet and closed his treacherous eyes.

No one seemed to notice this strange pet, save the bridegroom. In spite of all his swagger and assumed indifference, his small black eyes shifted continually from the form on the floor to the face of the woman. The man was a coward at heart, and the curling of the bride's lips spoke her thoughts plainer than language.

After the Syrah-box had been passed, and we had each taken a lemon-leaf, smeared it with lime, placed in it some broken fragments of the betel nut, and put the mixture into our mouths, we went outside to partake of the "honourable feast" of the bride's father, of goat and buffalo meat, of rice curry with forty sambuls, of vile smelling durians and luscious papayas, leaving the husband and wife with the women.

The white sand beneath our feet, the silver boles of the tall cocoanuts, the dark green and yellow fronds above, all caught the reflection of the fires, and formed a plaza of almost ethereal beauty.

The queer palm-thatched houses, built up six feet from the ground, filled with the flickering cocoanut oil lamps and gaily dressed women, seemed fitly set in the tropical surroundings.

I turned to my companion and said:

"The bride is not happy."

He looked up at the shimmering lacework of leaves, shrugged his shoulders once more, and answered:

"Who knows!"

I did not pursue the inquiry, but turned to watch a party of youths, naked from the waist up, who were tossing the *raga*, or wicker ball, from one end to another, striving to keep it from falling to the ground, by dexterous movements of their hands, feet, shoulders, and all parts of their body.

A long, piercing, blood-curdling snarl, followed by a cry of pain. I had heard it once, when a man-eating tiger had struck down a Chinese coolie within a rod of me.

The punghulo sprang to his feet, and grasped his kris from the folds of his sarong,—the kris his son-in-law had given him an hour before. With the agility of a cat he sped across the little space and up the ladder of his home.

We followed. A crowd of frightened women filled the narrow opening, all trying to escape. The old man dashed them aside, and headlong on the sand below.

A fearful scene presented itself to our view. On the floor, with his face to the roof, lay the bridegroom, his breast crushed, one arm broken. On him crouched the tiger, his eyes shining like coals, his lips drawn back, and his tail lashing his sides in quick, whiplike movements. The top of his head and his jaws were dripping with blood.

Seated on the daïs in her chair as we had left her, was the bride, with one arm extended across the back of the man's chair. From her left hand was flowing a stream of blood. In her other hand she held a small native dagger. She had fainted.

The significance of the scene flashed over me.

The look of disdain and aversion that she had cast upon her husband, the shrinking from his touch, all suggested to me a solution to the tragedy.

The girl had intentionally cut her hand so that her blood would fall directly on the tiger's nose. In an instant all the savage instincts of the beast had returned. He had tasted blood, and, true to his mistress's reasoning, had sprung on the first person that met his eye. That person was the man she loathed.

Half crazed with grief and fear, the old punghulo rushed forward, armed only with his naked kris. Before he could accomplish his mad feat, the Chief Justice caught him by the shoulder and threw him back into the crowd, at the same moment emptying two chambers of his revolver at the ferocious brute. The tiger sprang into the air with a yell of pain, and fastened his claws into the frail roofing of the house. It gave way, and he fell into the midst of the terrified throng.

Before he could strike down a single person the old chief was on him, and had stabbed him again and again.

It was all done before I could fire.

The girl opened her eyes, shuddered, and fainted again. Her women gathered about her, and carried her, with loud groans and cries, to their apartments.

After it was all over, and the dead bridegroom had been washed, shrouded in a cotton cloth, and laid out for burial, we started back to our camp.

I turned to the Chief Justice as we at last struggled out of the murky blackness of the jungle, and said, with an affected carelessness:

"Rather odd how that pet tiger came to spring on the husband of his mistress. A case of jealousy, do you suppose?"

He scanned my face intently for a moment in the flare of the torches, then raised his expressive shoulders, and muttered:

"Allah alone is wise."

NOTICE.

In the issue of PEARSON'S WEEKLY,

PUBLISHED ON

SATURDAY, JANUARY 26th,

Commences a New Serial Story by

GEORGE GRIFFITH, Author of

"THE OUTLAWS OF THE AIR," &c., &c.

PEARSON'S PHOTOGRAPHIC PORTFOLIO

OF

FOOTLIGHT FAVOURITES.

No. 3 NOW ON SALE, PRICE SIXPENCE.

Nos. 1 & 2 were sold out immediately on publication, so purchase No. 3 at once.

Digitized by Google

By George Griffith,

Author of "The Angel of the Revolution," "The Syren of the Skies," &c.

SUMMARY.

Max Renault—leading spirit of Anarchist Autonomie Group No. 7, who has joined the Utopians (a Socialistic colony on an island in the South Pacific) in order to steal the air-ship they are building, which he succeeds in doing.

Franz Hartog—a German engineer, in league with Renault, who steals a very fast torpedo-boat destroyer from the Russian Government to levy blackmail on the Atlantic.

Sir Harry Milton—a wealthy young English nobleman, who by chance comes across the island of Utopia in his yacht, the *Calypso*, and subsequently devotes the whole of his fortune to hunting down Renault and Hartog.

Herbert Wyndham—a lieutenant in the British Navy who is travelling with Sir Harry for the benefit of his health, and who determines to resign his commission and couple his energies with those of Sir Harry in destroying the Anarchists, on account of the fact that he has been stabbed by Renault when the latter attempts to carry off Violet in the air-ship.

Frederick Austen—the inventor of the air-ship, who shares its secret with Edward Adams, Dr. Edwards, and Ambrose Millar, three other Utopians.

Frank Markham—the young captain of the Utopian yacht, *Mermaid*.

Violet Milton—Sir Harry's sister, and Lieutenant Wyndham's sweetheart, is fearfully injured by throwing herself out of the air-ship on which Renault has tried to carry her off.

Lea Cassilis (alias Mme. Dail)—a member of Autonomie Group No. 7, with whom Renault is in love.

Dora Merton—a fair Utopian, who has made an impression on Sir Harry.

Lucy Summers—another fair Utopian.

Renault, after levying blackmail with Hartog on the high seas, returns to Utopia with the object of destroying the colony, but finds it deserted. After a time he goes to Europe in the air-ship *Vengeur*, and together with Lea Cassilis visits the Criterion Theatre, in London, where he is recognised by Sir Harry, and Lieutenant Wyndham, who effect his capture. He is tried and condemned to death, but is rescued while on the way to the scaffold by his confederates in the air-ship. London is then bombarded by the *Vengeur*. The Utopians in England have built an air-ship, and just as Sir Harry and his friends have started, three other air-ships appear on the scene. An aerial battle ensues in which, of the three Anarchist ships, one is destroyed, another escapes, and the third is captured.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Prisoners of War.

"The irony of fate!" exclaimed Mr. Austen, as the reply floated up out of the depths. "To think that our first prize of war should be the poor old *Volante*, as we meant to call her—the ship that we all spent so much thought and labour over in Utopia, and which I so fondly fancied was going to enable us to compel all the nations of the world to keep the peace—and here we meet her in our first battle!"

"Yes, queer enough certainly," laughed Sir Harry somewhat bitterly. "That's just how the Fates seem to delight in making fools of us." Then he turned to the open slide and sang out again in reply to the Anarchists' hail: "I suppose you know that surrender means being taken to Newcastle and handed over to the police."

"Dat is vat I suppose it does mean," came the answer. "It's not likely you are going to be kind enough to gif us a free passage to some safe blace, and set us at liberty. Ve know dat you can blow us into blazes and little bits if you like, and so ve vould rader go and see de police."

If Sir Harry had been a good deal closer than he was, he would have heard Franz Hartog—whom the reader will already have recognised in the commander of the crippled air-ship—mutter to himself in conclusion: "Dere is some chance to get avay from de police, but by de beard of Gambrinus dere is none to get avay from dose guns!"

"All right," replied Sir Harry. "How many men have you got on board?"

"Dere are eight besides mineself."

He clambered slowly up the ladder.

"Send them all up on deck, and look sharp about it," said Sir Harry. "Now, Mr. Austen," he continued, "it won't do to give those chaps any chance of treachery, and if you'll leave this business to me I think I have a plan that will make it impossible."

"With pleasure," said Mr. Austen. "You do just as you think best, and I'll keep an eye on them from here in case they do attempt any tricks."

"Thanks; then will you bring the *War-Hawk* right over her, and lower her to about thirty feet above her?"

So saying, he left the conning-tower, called the crew together, leaving a man stationed at each of the forward guns, and briefly explained what he was going to do. Two long rope ladders were then dropped through two slides in the lower part of the gun-room of the *War-Hawk*, which sank slowly down until their ends touched the deck of the *Vengeur*, so that they hung clear between her after lifting fan and the one in front of it. The two forward guns were now useless, so Sir Harry called the men from them, and told them to load two of the vertical bomb-tubes. Then he went to one of the slides and called down to the *Vengeur*, whose crew were now standing by the masts on the narrow deck.

"Are you all on deck?"

Digitized by Google

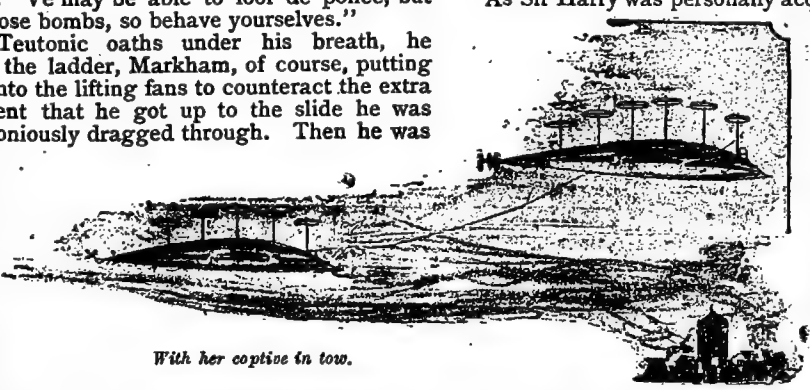
"Jah, ve are all here except de man at the engines. Do you vant us to come up de ladder?"

"Yes, but only one by one. If you're the captain, come up first by the starboard ladder. No nonsense, mind! Our bomb-tubes are loaded, and the moment I even think you are up to any tricks I'll blow you to pieces. Up you come, now!"

There was no choice save between obedience and destruction, and so Franz turned to his men and said:

"You hear dat, boys? De game is up for de present, so don't try any tricks. Ve may be able to fool de police, but ve can't argue mit dose bombs, so behave yourselves."

Then, growling Teutonic oaths under his breath, he clambered slowly up the ladder, Markham, of course, putting a little extra power into the lifting fans to counteract the extra weight. The moment that he got up to the slide he was seized, and unceremoniously dragged through. Then he was tied hand and foot, and meanwhile one of the *War-Hawk's* men climbed down the other ladder and took his place on the *Vengeur's* deck. The moment he got there he whipped a couple of revolvers out of his belt and covered the Anarchists. Then Sir Harry called out again:



With her captive in tow.

"Now then, next man, up you come!"

The second Anarchist at once commenced the ascent to captivity. As he went up, another *War-Hawk* went down, and so the two crews exchanged places until five of the Anarchists, including Hartog, were lying bound in the gun-room, and five of the *War-Hawk's* men were on board the *Vengeur*. These speedily tied up the remainder of her crew, and then took charge of her engines. Then a rope was passed down from the stern of the *War-Hawk* and made fast to the *Vengeur's* bow, and when all was ready Sir Harry went back to the conning-tower.

"Very neatly done indeed, Sir Harry," said Mr. Austen. "This will be a very pleasant little surprise to the good people in Newcastle. By the way, have you learnt whether or not Renault was on board any of the ships?"

"No, I haven't," laughed Sir Harry. "I tried to get it out of that little brute of a German, who—would you believe it?—is Franz Hartog, the man who stole the Russian torpedo boat, and turned her into the *Destroyer*, but he cursed me by all his gods and told me to find out for myself. Still, I believe he was on that one that escaped, because when I indulged in a little politic romance and told him we had blown her to pieces, he let out a gasp of genuine disgust which there was no mistaking."

"And so he's Franz Hartog, is he?" said Mr. Austen, lifting his eye-brows. "Then if that's so, whether Renault has got away or not, we can congratulate ourselves on having made the next important capture to him. I expect by this time Herr Franz is pretty sorry that he didn't stick to sea piracy instead of taking to the air."

"Yes," laughed Sir Harry. "He is about the most disgusted man I ever saw."

"All right for towing now, Mr. Austen," came a message from the engine-room, as Sir Harry ceased speaking.

"Very well," he replied down the tube. "Go slowly at first and quicken up gradually. Don't bring too much strain on the rope at once."

Then the *War-Hawk's* propellers began to revolve and she moved away to the eastward with her captive in tow at an increasing speed that gradually quickened up to fifty miles an hour. A little over an hour's towing brought the lights of Newcastle once more beneath them.

A long blur of darkness to the north-east marked the position of Jesmond Dene and Armstrong Park. Sir Harry knew the topography of Newcastle perfectly, and under his guidance the two air-ships crossed the town unseen, above the clouds of smoke that were rising from the conflagrations, and dropped like shadows on to the open space between the clump of trees and the old watch tower overlooking the now deserted valley of Armstrong Park.

It was now after ten o'clock at night, but the fire brigades were still working hard in extinguishing the fires which had been started by the Anarchist fire-shells, and nearly the whole population was out in the streets in a state of excitement bordering on panic, waiting for the air-ship to reappear in the skies and complete her work by bringing the doom of Central London upon Newcastle.

As Sir Harry was personally acquainted both with the Mayor and Captain Nicholls, the Chief of Police, he thought it would be better for him to go personally to explain the strange occurrences which had brought them with their prisoners to the town. As soon, therefore, as the air-ships touched ground he landed and went to the gate-lodge, where a brief explanation and a sovereign quickly secured his exit.

Crossing "Sir William's Bridge" he was lucky enough to be overtaken by an unoccupied cab, and in this he drove straight to the Police Station in Pilgrim Street, where he found the Mayor in consultation with the Chief Constable, discussing plans for obtaining protection for the town in case the panic in the streets should degenerate into riot. His card secured his immediate admission to the chief's private room, for his connection with the Aerial Navigation Syndicate was well known, and in addition to this his personal influence in the county, and his acquaintance with the Mayor, made him doubly welcome at such a moment.

"Good evening, Sir Harry!" said the Mayor, rising from his seat when he entered, and holding out his hand. "We were talking about you only a moment ago. I suppose you know we are in terrible trouble? The Anarchists have been bombarding the town from one of their air-ships. When is your Syndicate going to get its fleet afloat and hunt these scoundrels from the air? And where have *you* come from, by the way? Have you dropped from the clouds?"

"That is just exactly what I have done," laughed Sir Harry, as he shook hands with him and the Chief of Police. "I have just come down in one of those very ships, and what's more I've brought an Anarchist ship with me, and all her crew prisoners of war; so all you have got to do is to send out the prison-van to Armstrong Park, and bring them home and lock them up."

The Mayor and Captain Nicholls stared at him for a moment in blank astonishment. He had told his startling tidings in as matter-of-fact a voice as if he had been asking them to dinner, and it took some time for them to grasp the full meaning of what he said. Then the Mayor found his voice again, and exclaimed:

"What! You have captured the air-ship and brought the scoundrels on board her prisoners into Armstrong Park? I thought the age of miracles was past, but if you've done that it isn't, and the thanks of the two towns will be yours, for you have done them the greatest service that anyone could do them. As you can see for yourself, the scoundrels have set Newcastle and Gateshead on fire in about a dozen places, besides wrecking twenty or thirty buildings with their shells."

"Stop a moment," said Sir Harry; "I haven't fully explained myself yet. I am sorry to say we have not captured the particular air-ship that did the damage. You'll scarcely believe me, but she has got clear away, although we were floating over her at the very time she was firing on the town. We did not fire on her, because, you see, if we had done so, every shot that missed her would have struck you; while if we had hit her, she would have come down with about a ton of explosives on board and levelled half Newcastle with the ground."

Digitized by Google

"I see! I see!" said the Mayor. "Of course you couldn't. But which air-ship is it that you've captured?"

"There were three of them," replied Sir Harry. "They came to attack us this evening on one of the Farne Islands on which we built the ship I have come in, but we just managed to give them the slip. We have destroyed one, captured another, and, as I say, the one that fired on you has escaped. But I'll tell you something else we've done. We've caught Franz Hartog, that brute of a German engineer who stole the torpedo destroyer from Elbing, and committed all those horrors on the Atlantic. So you'll have quite a distinguished prisoner you see."

"That's glorious news, isn't it!" exclaimed the Mayor, turning to the Chief of Police. "I needn't say I hope you'll hold him tight when you get him."

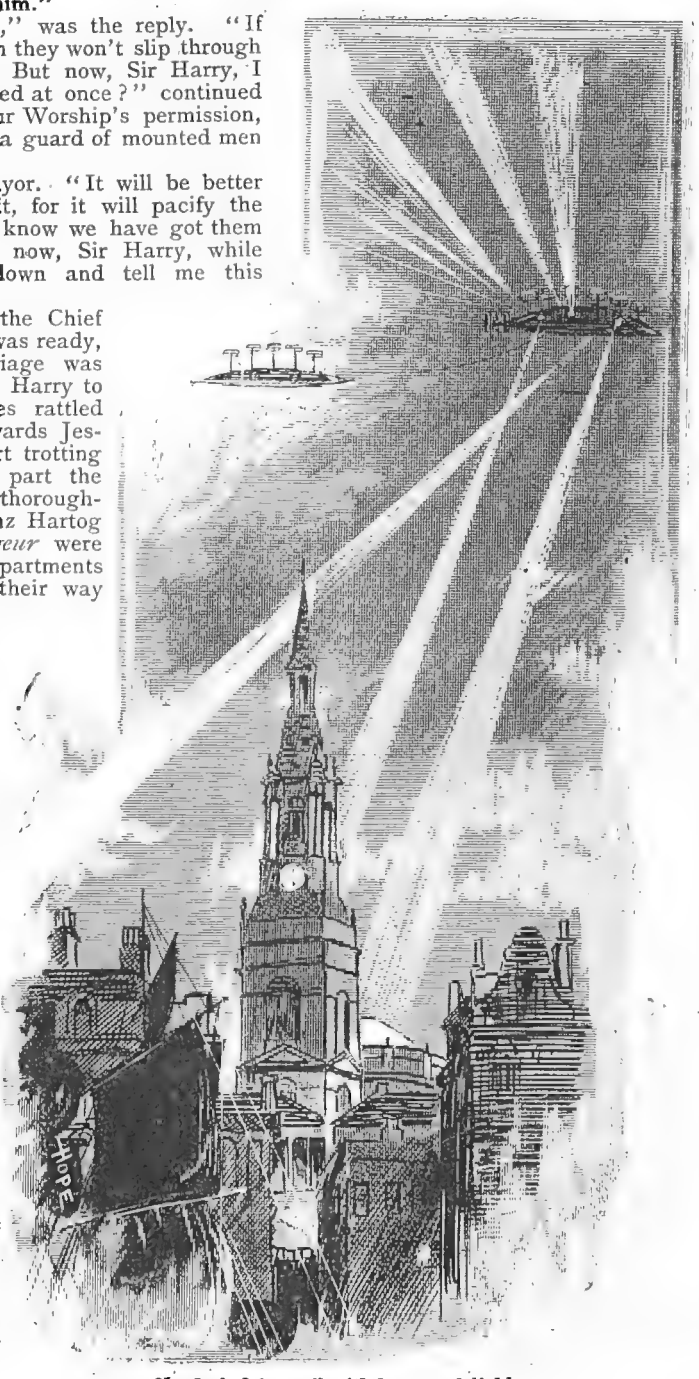
"There's no fear of that," was the reply. "If walls and doors will hold them they won't slip through my fingers, I can tell you. But now, Sir Harry, I suppose you want them fetched at once?" continued the Captain. "So, with your Worship's permission, I'll get out the van and have a guard of mounted men ready to go with it."

"Very well," said the Mayor. "It will be better not to lose any time about it, for it will pacify the people wonderfully when they know we have got them under lock and key. And now, Sir Harry, while they're getting ready, sit down and tell me this wonderful story over again."

In a quarter of an hour the Chief returned to say that the van was ready, and that the Mayor's carriage was waiting to take him and Sir Harry to the Park. The two vehicles rattled away up Pilgrim Street towards Jesmond Road with their escort trotting on either side of them, to part the crowd that filled the great thoroughfare, and within an hour Franz Hartog and the crew of the *Vengeur* were safely stowed away in the compartments of the prison van, and on their way back to the cells.

The news of the capture spread like wildfire through the towns, and was immediately telegraphed all over the country, to be reproduced with unexpected effects, as events proved, in all the morning papers.

The good people of Newcastle would fain have lionised Sir Harry, and made a public spectacle of his marvellous craft, but as the *War-Hawk* was already over-due at Lundy he declined even the Mayor's invitation to sleep at his house, and, as soon as he had seen the Anarchists safely within the grim, black walls of the gaol in Carliol Square, he returned to the Park, and the *War-Hawk*, with the *Vengeur* still in tow, rose into the air amidst a mighty roar of cheers from the thousands who had gathered on the great viaduct and about the Park gates to catch a glimpse of the now famous vessel. She flashed farewell with her search-lights and sped away up into the clouds *en route* for Lundy Island.



She flashed farewell with her search-lights.

CHAPTER XL.

MAX TO THE RESCUE.

THE next morning the whole country was ringing with the fame of the *War-Hawk* and her exploits. The reaction from the horror and panic induced by the merciless revenge which Renault had taken upon London to the cheering certainty that, after all, the world was not to be given over unresisting to the fury of its worst enemies, and that at last the Syndicate had brought into existence a power capable of successfully disputing the empire of the air with them, sent the nation almost wild with delight.

Of course the newspapers published voluminous accounts, necessarily imaginative, of the aerial combats between the *War-Hawk* and the Anarchist vessels, and more reliable if no less highly coloured narratives of her coming with her prisoners of war to Newcastle. Once more Sir Harry's portrait appeared in all the illustrated periodicals, together with alleged pictures of his wonderful vessel, which represented her under a variety of forms, from that of a flying torpedo boat to that of a gigantic bird with screw propellers instead of a tail.

Once more the whole nation was talking about nothing but the Anarchists and the Syndicate, and the hostile fleets of air-ships which the popular imagination multiplied until they were numerous enough to have shaken the heavens and devastated the earth in their conflicts.

All this was perfectly natural and indeed inevitable, and yet, as events speedily proved, it was the very worst thing that could possibly have happened. Three days passed without any of the air-ships belonging to either side having made a sign of their existence. The *Vengeur* had been taken to Lundy Island, and placed for repairs on the slips on which the *Volante* had been put together, after which both the *Volante* and the *War-Hawk* had vanished to destinations unknown to any but the directors of the Syndicate.

Then, on the early morning of the fourth day after Hartog and his ship-mates had been placed in durance vile, Newcastle woke up to find itself placarded, just as London had been, with the ominous red posters which demanded the immediate and unconditional release of the prisoners under pain of aerial bombardment.

The message from the enemy was brief and to the point. By ten o'clock Hartog and his companions were to be put on board a steam launch and taken ten miles

Digitized by Google

out to sea, where they would be picked up by an air-ship. If a white flag was not hoisted over the police-station to show that this had been done, the bombardment would begin at half-past ten.

There was no doubt this time as to whether the threats would be fulfilled or not. The experience of London conclusively showed what the fate of Newcastle would be if the order was disobeyed. The feeling of relief that had been enjoyed since the capture of the *Vengeur* instantly gave place to panic again.

The Mayor at once telegraphed to the offices of the Syndicate and to the Home Office, imploring assistance and the protection of the aerial fleet which was believed to be in existence. Of course, the Government could do nothing. It had no engine of warfare at its disposal that could cope for an instant with the Anarchist air-ships, and Mr. Maxim telegraphed back in the name of the Syndicate saying that the only two available vessels were beyond the reach of communications, and reminding the authorities that, having taken no precautions to insure secrecy, they could only expect the Anarchists would be informed of what had happened by the newspapers and would naturally do as they had done.

With this cold comfort Newcastle was obliged to be content. The authorities were confronted with what was in sober truth a very terrible dilemma. On the one hand, there was the dignity of the law to be vindicated; and on the other, there was a practically impossible penalty to be paid for doing so. To yield meant to confess before all the world that the forces of Anarchy were superior to those of civilisation and order, and so, to all intents and purposes, held the world for the time being at their mercy; while to resist meant to consign one of the wealthiest and most populous towns of the kingdom to destruction and carnage horrible beyond all description.

What had happened a few nights before, terrible and all as it had been, would be as nothing to what was now threatened, for the placard distinctly stated that the town would be bombarded by a fleet of twenty air-ships, that they would destroy friend with foe, and that if Hartog and his companions died their tomb would be the ruins of Newcastle and Gateshead.

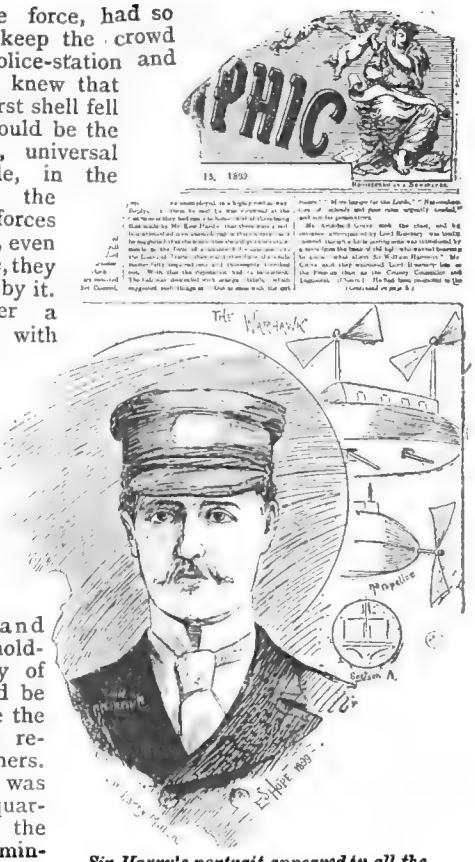
What was to be done? At half-past eight the Mayor, in an agony of perplexity, telegraphed to the Home Office for precise instructions. He said that the prisoners had been before the magistrates two days previously, had been formally committed for trial, and were now lying in the town gaol, awaiting the assizes. In an hour the reply came back, to the effect that the law was to take its course at all hazards. The moment this decision became known, the population of the two towns revolted *en masse*, and turned out into the streets, vowing that the prisoners should be released if they pulled the gaol down with their own hands to do it.

The psychological moment had arrived, and the habit of respect for the law suddenly succumbed to the irresistible terror which affected everyone in precisely the same way. All had lives and homes to lose, most had families and property as well. The rich man feared for his mansion just as the artisan feared for his cottage. Rich and poor were, for the moment, united in the presence of an impending fate which would make no distinctions of class or fortune.

The elementary idea upon which all law is founded—the preservation of life, peace, and property—was suddenly inverted. To obey the law meant to lose everything that the law was supposed to safeguard. In other words, a power stronger than the law had sprung into existence and annulled it at a stroke.

There was no time for demonstrations or speech-making or discussion. The Watch Committee of the Town Council had been sitting since seven o'clock. The streets were full of angry and excited multitudes animated by a single purpose, and the town authorities were speedily made aware of what that purpose was.

Considering the terrible and unparalleled position in which he was placed, the Mayor acted with wonderful coolness and discretion. Staunch respecter of the law as he was, he clearly saw, as the moment for making a final decision grew rapidly nearer, that to obey the law was to defeat it. Half a dozen troops of lancers and as many companies of infantry, with the whole police force, had so far sufficed to keep the crowd clear of the police-station and the gaol; but he knew that the moment the first shell fell from the sky it would be the signal for panic, universal and ungovernable, in the midst of which the military and civil forces would be helpless, even if, by some miracle, they were not infected by it.



Sir Harry's portrait appeared in all the illustrated periodicals.

Therefore, after a brief discussion with his colleagues, he telegraphed back to the Home Office to say that the town was practically in revolt, and that, unless the Government could furnish him with the means of protecting life and property and upholding the authority of the law, he would be compelled to take the responsibility of releasing the prisoners.

This message was despatched at a quarter to ten, but the Mayor had determined not to obey the summons of the Anarchists until the very last moment—until, in fact, their air-ship appeared in the sky in fulfilment of their threat.

All but official telegraphic communication between Newcastle and London had been stopped. In five minutes the message was being read off to the Home Secretary. In ten more two other messages were being flashed back to Newcastle.

One was to the colonel commanding the troops in the town ordering him to bring the prisoners by special train to London at all hazards, and directing him to acquaint the Mayor with his instructions. The other was to the senior captain of the coast defence squadron stationed in the Tyne ordering him to close the river until the prisoners were on their way to London.

By a quarter past ten the town was practically under martial law. The Mayor bowed to circumstances, ended the sitting of the Town Council, and retired to his private room to await the issue of events he could not longer control. The colonel in command of the troops made his way with a strong guard to the gaol and requested the governor to have the prisoners at once removed to the station, where a special train was already being made up.

The excitement of the populace had now risen to the pitch of frenzy, but the knowledge that the magazine rifles of the Infantry and the carbines of the Cavalry were loaded with ball cartridge, prevented any actual outbreak for the time being. Just as the half hour sounded from the tower of St. Nicholas the gates of the gaol opened and the prison van came out from the deep archway under the first entrance tower.

The same moment a mighty roar of terror went up from the throats of the hundreds of thousands of people filling the Manors, Erick Street, Croft Street, and all the approaches to Carliol Square, save Worswick Street and the space in front of the gaol gateway, which were kept clear by the police and the soldiers, and thousands of hands were pointed upwards to the sky. From a score of points all round the town the dreaded air-ships were rapidly approaching.

Digitized by Google

They stopped at a height of about fifteen hundred feet, plainly in view of everyone against the clear sky. One of them, flying a plain blood-red flag from her flagstaff astern, swept down swiftly in the direction of the gaol, and stopped five hundred feet from the ground and about seven hundred yards in a straight line from the gates where the guard was drawn up round the prison van. The moment she came to a standstill, the colonel raised his sword and ordered his men to fire on her.

The rifles went up with mechanical precision, but before a trigger could be pulled three streams of fire spouted from the air-ship's broadside and a storm of Maxim bullets was poured into the broad open space in front of the gaol. Horses and men went down under it in huddled heaps to the ground. The colonel was almost the first man to fall, and before the withering hail had been raining down for five minutes there was neither man nor horse left alive within fifty yards of the prison van.

The crowds that had been watching for its departure surged back, screaming with terror, and treading its weaker members under foot in its mad rush for shelter from the bullets of the terrible machine guns. At the same moment, the other air-ships opened a converging fire of shells from twenty points upon the devoted town and the crowds who thronged the streets.

Instantly the prisoners were forgotten, and all control was at an end. Buildings were collapsing in every direction under the frightful energy of the explosives rained upon them, and hurricanes of bullets were sweeping along the streets. In the midst of the indescribable panic which now reigned supreme, the air-ship with the red flag ran forward and dropped to within fifty feet of the ground close by the prison van. She was the *Revanche*, Renault's new flagship, and the same craft which had so narrowly escaped destruction by the *War-Hawk* four days before.

Her fore and aft guns sent shell after shell down the Manors and into the ends of Worswick Street and Erick Street, until she floated over a solitude cumbered with ruins and strewn with hundreds of corpses. Then a rope ladder dropped to the ground from one of her ports, a couple of men descended, went to the van and took the keys from the corpse of a policeman lying by the step, rapidly opened the doors, and brought the handcuffed prisoners out.

They were all there, Hartog and the eight men who had been so ignominiously captured on board the *Vengeur*. Their handcuffs were speedily unlocked, and, as soon as his hands were free, Franz ran towards the air-ship crying:

"*Ach, mein lieber Max!* I knew you vould come for us. I tought you vere not de man to run avay and leave your friendt in trouble. How did you know dat ve vere in de van?"

"I guessed it, my friend," replied Max, who was leaning out of one of the port-holes laughing at the comical figure presented by the little German in his unwonted excitement. "My glasses showed me the soldiers round it, and I felt pretty sure that they wouldn't honour anyone but you with a military escort."

"Ah! jah, and vere is dat escort now?" chuckled Franz, looking round with an evil grin at the mangled and riddled corpses of the unhappy red-coats. "I vonder ven dese fools vill learn dat dey can only fight air-ships mit air-ships?"

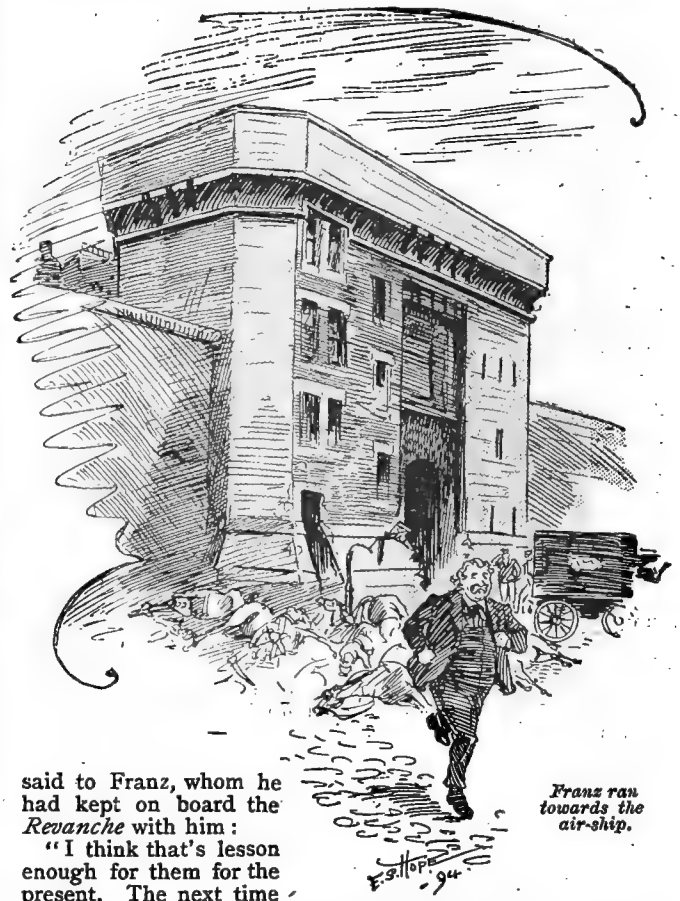
"Well, you ought to be able to teach them," laughed Max in reply. "How the deuce did you let yourselves get taken prisoners like a lot of tame pigeons?"

"Mein friendt—if you had had one of dose shells bursting among your propellers, and blowing holes in your stern like ve had, I don't tink you vould have been able to run avay quite as fast as you did," snapped Franz, and the retort was so smartly turned that Max himself could not help joining in the laugh that it raised against him.

"I fought and ran away so as I could fight another day," he said, when the laugh had died away. "And it's a precious good job for you that I did. But come along, we can't stop here talking all day. Up you come, all of you! We are missing half the fun. Stand by, there, to put more power on to the fans," he continued, turning towards the interior of the ship, and as the released prisoners climbed one by one up the ladder the lifting fans revolved faster and faster, and as soon as the last had got on board the *Revanche* rose slowly into the air, her propellers spun round until she was moving at a speed of sixty miles an hour, and the added weight, supported by the air-planes, was no longer felt.

As soon as he was on a level with the other ships, Max visited them one after the other until he had distributed the late crew of the *Vengeur* among eight of them. Meanwhile the bombardment had been kept up by the whole fleet with pitiless vigour.

When he had transferred the last of the *Vengeur's* men, he



Franz ran towards the air-ship.

said to Franz, whom he had kept on board the *Revanche* with him:

"I think that's lesson enough for them for the present. The next time we ask them to oblige us, perhaps they will be a little more civil about it. We've got a better use for our ammunition than this. François, hoist the signal to cease firing, and then the one for the fleet to collect."

"Vat for is dat?" asked Franz, with a look of undisguised disappointmont. "Vat better use could you have for your ammunition dan burning dose rats out down dere? Mein Gott, see vat blazes! Dere von't be half de town left by evening. I don't see how you can find a finer game dan dis."

"Can't I?" laughed Max. "You wait till we get on the other side of the North Sea, and you'll see. I had news last night that the French and Russian fleets are going to break the British blockade of the Sound to-night, and I don't see why we shouldn't have a share of the fun. You see, they'll be battering each other to pieces on the water, and as we love one of them just about as much as the other, well just get above them and——"

"And make a tree-cornered fight of it, and smash dem all up mit a fine and generous impartiality!" interrupted Franz, bringing his hands together with a sounding clap. "Friendt Max, you are a genius! Dat vill be something like sport. Dis is no better as burning haystacks beside it. Let us go at vonce, in case dey begin before ve come."

(To be continued.)

Digitized by Google

THE BLUE LETTER

"YOUR last evening in Russia, Charlie," said Ivan Zosemoff, my brother-in-law, as we strolled along the side of the quay at Dolganief in the cool of the evening. "Well, shall you be glad to get back to old England?"

I shook my head very energetically in reply. Ivan shrugged his shoulders with an air of comic despair.

"Well, I must say you are unpatriotic," he observed. "Here am I, in my own country, longing to be back in England, while you, an Englishman—I beg your pardon, an English boy——"

"Don't happen to have a wife in London, and am therefore less eager to get back," I interrupted.

"If Peter Petrovitch wasn't telling me lies," I went on, "I missed a good adventure this afternoon. He says there was a riot down by the Haymarket; the police pounced upon a meeting of the 'Red Fingers,' and fired upon them when they resisted. Didn't you hear about it? Two of the Nihilists were shot, but their companions got them clear away; and Peter Petrovitch says they are hidden in the city somewhere, and haven't been found yet. I wish I had been there."

Ivan had been glancing round rather uneasily all the while I was speaking. He stopped me now with a low "hush!"—and, looking behind me I saw a man apparently following us, his face muffled up closely and with his hat down over his eyes.

The stranger did not pass us, as I thought he was about to do by the way in which he came up. Instead, he turned and, taking off his hat with great politeness, addressed my brother-in-law.

"Ivan Zosemoff, I believe?"

"That is so," said Ivan, shortly, letting the match in his fingers burn itself out. As it flared up I saw that Ivan was suddenly looking quite pale.

"Perhaps you will come back and take a turn with me on the quay," said the stranger, in the same tone of studied politeness. "I am Nicholas Petrowsky, and I have a message from my brother——"

"Peter Petrowsky!" exclaimed Ivan; and as I struck another match to see Petrowsky's face, I noticed that Ivan was more disturbed than ever. "He quarrelled with me last night," he said.

"Yes—I think that is why he wishes to see you. He is dying."

Ivan turned, and said to me in English:

"Perhaps you had better go, Charlie. I will join you at the hotel some time to-night."

"And lose the chance of an adventure," I answered. "Well, I call it a thundering shame!"

My brother-in-law smiled faintly.

"I wish you could have had the adventure alone. Listen! Six years ago, when I was young and impetuous, I joined the Society of the Red Finger here at Dolganief. A week later, when I found in its midst more thirst for murder and revenge than for the welfare of the people, I was anxious to leave it. Fortunately I was allowed to retire, thanks mainly to the influence of this Peter Petrowsky who wishes to see me. I dare not neglect the summons. But you——."

"Will stick to you, old man, like a leech."

"You had better let our friend think you speak only English, then," replied Ivan; and he turned to Petrowsky and explained to him in Russian that I was English and that I wished to accompany him.

"Ah, the English are always friends of freedom!" said Petrowsky, with a bow of greater politeness than before; and I almost forgot to wait for Ivan to translate the remark before bowing in return and saying that I hoped so.

As we left the quay-side again, to turn down the dark, narrow thoroughfare where Petrowsky first accosted us, he proposed that we should walk slowly along smoking, so as not to attract attention.

It struck me then for the first time that the man we were about to see must be one of those about whom Peter Petrovitch, the hotel waiter, had told me—the "Red Fingers"—who had been wounded by the police and hidden away by friends.

"Before we go any further," said Petrowsky, when we had crossed the deserted square and turned into another dark, lonely street of dilapidated buildings, "I must extract a promise from you."

"And your condition?" inquired Ivan impatiently.

"My friends' condition is that you agree, before accompanying me to my brother's side, to remain there for twelve hours, which will place it out of your power to do us harm."

Ivan drew out his watch.

"It is nearly nine o'clock," he said. "My ship is to sail at eleven to-morrow. It is cutting it rather fine."

"Unfortunately, I am not allowed to alter the terms. It is hard to deny a dying man's request; but, of course, if you cannot keep the arrangement of my friends, we must part here."

"And Peter Petrowsky wants to ask me to forgive something?" said Ivan, almost to himself.

"And is more anxious than I can describe to see you," added Petrowsky. "Well—your decision, Mr. Zosemoff?"

"In return, will you pledge me your word that in twelve hours I shall be allowed to depart without further restriction?"

"Certainly."

"Then I pledge you my word as a gentleman, to remain," said Ivan.

A few minutes later we had turned up an almost pitch-dark alley; and Petrowsky, whispering to us to follow him, unlocked a door which we could not see in the obscurity. Then, after closing it behind him, he commenced to grope his way before us up a broken and uneven staircase. He did not pause till we were on the third landing, where we could see a faint light shining beneath the door of one of the rooms. Petrowsky gave a peculiar whistle, and the door was thrown open, showing a large room, which might have been used for a workshop or warehouse, and which at first sight, as one peered into it from the darkness, appeared to be full of people.

There were only five there, I noticed, as I stood within and looked around—three sitting beside a low smouldering fire, which, with two flaring candles, lighted the room, and two lying on some straw which was scattered over the floor.

The men by the fire stared at us as we entered. One with a big black beard spoke to Nicholas Petrowsky, our guide.

"He has promised?" he inquired.

Petrowsky nodded.

"And the youngster?"

"He is English, and does not count."

As Petrowsky spoke, he was bending over one of the figures on the floor.

"He is alive and knows you have come," he said, looking up and speaking to Ivan, who still stood in the doorway. Then my brother-in-law went over and knelt down in the straw by the dying man's side; but I hardly noticed their greeting, for I was fascinated.

The other man, who was reclining beside Peter Petrowsky

Digitized by Google

appeared, like him, to be wounded, and as I entered the room he fixed his eyes upon me, and I could not keep mine from his face. It was deathly pale and bore traces of a recent encounter, and a linen bandage was bound round his temples. He lay in the straw with his head raised a little, his lips moving as though he were speaking to himself. His terrible eyes fascinated me, holding me spell-bound.

I wished to listen to what Peter Petrowsky had to say to my brother-in-law, but I could not tear myself away from that terrible face. I do not know how long I had been gazing at it—at the eyes that were glaring straight into mine—when suddenly the man half rose and raised his hand towards me.

"It is very cold this evening," he said quietly.

I was so utterly surprised at this commonplace remark from a man who seemed to me to be dying that I almost laughed; and, forgetful of Ivan's caution, I should have answered the remark in Russian if the man himself had not spoken again after a moment's pause.

"It is colder in the mines," he said; and then he fell back.

The men sitting round the fire had all risen at his first words, exchanging glances. One of them came over now and knelt down beside him.

"Poor Alexander Romanoff is dead," he said simply, as he looked at him.

In a little while Ivan came over to me. He looked ill, poor fellow, and his cheeks were as white as death.

"Come, Charlie—we must go at once," he said, putting his hand upon my shoulder.

"What is the matter?" I asked.

"Petrowsky has denounced me to the police and given an exaggerated account of my connection with the society. It is all up with me unless I can get out of Russia at once or stop Petrowsky's letter. The government have no mercy on 'Red Fingers.' Oh, why did I leave England, where I was in safety? Oh, Eleanor, Eleanor!"

"Stopping a letter. What letter?" I asked.

"One which Peter Petrowsky wrote this morning to the Head of the Police here at Dolganief. My poor friend is suffering terrible remorse now, and is as anxious as I am to have his letter stopped. But I am afraid it must have been delivered an hour ago."

"But may be still unread. Has he described it to you?"

"Yes, poor fellow; he has done all he could. It is large, he tells me, for it contains letters of mine. The envelope is blue, and there is a large seal on the back in green wax."

"Come," I said, "we must go at once and visit the Head of the Police, and invent some story to induce him to give it up."

"No," said Ivan. "That would be running into the lion's mouth. I must disguise myself and go to another port. They will be waiting to arrest me on the vessel to-morrow; not a moment is to be lost!"

As he spoke he took up his hat and stick and moved towards the door. Nicholas Petrowsky walked slowly across to it and put his back against it.

"You seem to be forgetting your promise, Mr. Zosemoff," he said quietly.

Ivan started. We had both of us entirely forgotten the promise he had made to remain twelve hours in Peter Petrowsky's hiding-place.

"But you hear," Ivan pleaded passionately, addressing himself to Nicholas Petrowsky and forgetting he had given me the news in English, "your brother has denounced me to the police. If I do not escape at once, I shall never see England again. I have a wife there waiting for me. You cannot keep me to my promise!"

"Why has he denounced you?" he asked.

"Six years ago I was in the society of the Red Finger——"

"And left it? Then you must look for no mercy from us," he said coldly.

Ivan's white forehead was covered with moisture. Suddenly he rushed to Peter Petrowsky's side.

"Your dying brother will speak for me," he said. "Good Heavens"—as he turned—"he is dead!"

Nicholas Petrowsky crossed over to where his brother lay; the other men all turned. I thought the opportunity too good to be lost, and, conquering an inclination to faint, slipped noiselessly out at the door. I had given no promise, and I was determined to get hold of that large blue letter with the green seal before it was opened by the Head of the Dolganief Police.

Once out in the street I was safe. The private house of General Vanrow, the Head of the Dolganief Police, was not far from our hotel; Peter Petrovitch, the waiter, had pointed it out to me. While I was making my way towards it through the narrow streets filled by people of the lowest class, a man suddenly ran out of a dark entry which I was passing, and before I knew what he was about, had snatched my watch out of my pocket and run away with it. I did not pursue him; the theft delighted me. I had been racking my brains to think of some pretext for getting into the house of the Chief of Police, and here Providence had furnished me with one.

It was not long before I had reached the place, passed the sentry at the gate, and was ringing at the door-bell, although I had only the most vague idea as to what I should do when it was answered.

The door was opened by a muscular-looking footman, to whom, in accordance with Russian etiquette, I presented a couple of kopecks before inquiring if his master were at home. The man looked at the money, pocketed it in a leisurely manner, and replied that his master was not at home. I had been fearing the two kopecks were not sufficient, so I presented the man with two more, and said it was really very important that I should see the Head of Police at once; to which the footman replied with more friendliness, after pocketing his fee, that General Vanrow was at the neighbouring town of Doushkin, and would be back possibly at midnight.

"Your master has not been at home all day?" I asked.

"He has been away since yesterday."

"And his letters—who has opened them?" I inquired, anxious to gain as much information as possible. "My business is about a letter," I explained.

"The letters have not been opened."

"Mr. Vanrow will open them to-night?"

"Yes, he is pretty certain to do so. He always glances at his letters the first thing on entering the house when he has been away."

The man was growing impatient and prepared to close the door, but I prevented him by putting my foot against it.

"My business is very important. I will wait your master's arrival," I said.

I tried to keep calm, even when the footman refused point-blank to allow me to wait, saying he would be dismissed at once if he allowed anybody to bother his master at such an unseasonable hour, when he would be worn out with his journey. I had five kopecks left in my pocket. I gave the man one to prolong his conversation; with the other four I was contemplating the purchase of the compromising letter. This promised, however, to be a ticklish matter.

"Among your master's letters," I said, rushing to the point before the effect of my *douceur* had passed off, "do you remember one in a blue envelope—a bulky one sealed with a green seal?"

"I remember it perfectly," the man said in a tone which encouraged me. "It arrived this afternoon."

"That letter was sent in a moment of passion," I went on. "The sender wished it unsent."

"Well," asked my listener in a tone which did not encourage me much—"well, what do you want me to do?"

"I have here four kopecks. To-morrow I can bring you much more, if you will allow me to take back that letter to the man who sent it, and who immediately afterwards wished it unsent."

I had misjudged the man. He made no reply, but the next moment had slammed the door in my face; and I found myself standing alone in the porch. However, I would not give up the case as hopeless, but stood there waiting, at intervals ringing the bell, till at last one of the sentinels in front of the house came and turned me away.

I wandered round and round the house and grounds, exciting the curiosity, I have no doubt, of the lazy-looking sentries who

Digitized by Google

were placed at wide intervals round it. One of them standing outside a small door in the garden wall at the back, who seemed to eye me more curiously than the rest, startled me, as I was passing him for the third time, by saying, almost in a whisper:

"It is very cold this evening."

They were the very words which had been ringing in my ears ever since the wounded Nihilist fell dead immediately after uttering them. Almost mechanically I uttered the dying man's other remark:

"It is colder in the mines."

I was surprised at the effect of my words; instantly the man threw open the door before which he stood, and almost thrust me through into the dark garden.

"Quick!" he whispered. "There is a light in the supper-room; his library is below!"

The next moment I heard the door close behind me, and I was left alone to meditate on the strange fortune which had given me an entrance to Vanrow's premises.

Before me lay the dark house. On the first floor one window alone was illuminated, all the rest were in darkness. But, as I crouched there, shivering at every rustle of the trees around me, a light appeared in the room below.

It was the General's library, the sentry had told me; and as his words recurred to me, my heart seemed to stand still. For surely the General's letters would be waiting for him in that room, and the light might mean that the Head of the Police had returned and was about to open them. The thought brought back a little courage, and I nerved myself to creep along as noiselessly as I could towards the light.

The Chief of the Police must have trusted very implicitly to the watch of his drowsy sentries, for the window below which he sat was not even curtained, and, as he sat in the light of a small reading lamp at his desk, any one with a revolver could have shot him easily enough from the spot to which I had crawled.

One by one the letters lying on his table were torn open by the Head of the Police. The fatal missive, which I recognised at once, was the seventh.

The General took the letter in his hand and turned it over, examining the seal. Despair made me reckless. I rose from the spot where I had been crouching and advanced a step towards the window. One impulse alone possessed me—to prevent that compromising budget being read. A moment more and I should have done something desperate; but, as if under the influence of my will, the general yawned and threw the letter down on his desk unopened. I drew back to the sheltering shade; and as I did so, Vanrow rose and pushed back his chair. The next instant the room was in darkness; he had blown out the lamp.

After a few moments I crawled along to the window, crouching down beneath the sill and raising my arms to try to push up the sash. No sooner had I touched the woodwork than it moved, and I felt the window raised out of my grasp. I drew back my hands quickly, and crept close to the wall beneath the window, not daring to breathe.

It was well I could draw myself into a small space, for a man's leg came out of the room right over me, and I could just feel it touch me as he stepped out. It was almost a miracle that the man passed over me. His movements were so altogether noiseless that I had quite a superstitious dread of him. But the man's boot made no sound as he stole away from the house, and that reassured me a little.

He had left the window open. Now was the moment, I told myself, for me to enter the house and steal the letter. But I do not think I could have summoned up courage even then, with the window wide open for me, if it had not been that I was a little more afraid of the garden with the silent Nihilist creeping about it than of the house with only a matter-of-fact official inside.

With very little noise I got into the room, and, feeling my way to the desk, groped over the top of it, where I had seen the letters lying. They were all gone! I stood there completely at a loss, and then, unwilling to give up hope, groped once more over the green cloth which covered the surface of the desk. Yes—the letters were gone.

But upon the desk was something which I had not seen when I looked through the window—something square with metallic sides. I passed my hand over it, wonderingly. How silent the room was! I could hear my watch ticking quite loudly, I thought. And then it flashed into my mind that my watch had been stolen—that the low, steady ticking came from this metal box, over which my hand was wandering in its hopeless search for the letter. And with that thought I drew back my hand suddenly as if stung. But the next moment I was glad.

There was time for me to escape surely, and then the terrible, low-ticking would blow the blue letter into atoms—not a trace would be left—and with it, whether he had read it or not, the Head of the Dolganief Police.

But it seemed such a pity for General Vanrow to be blown up if he had not read the letter. With a sudden impulse, I rushed to the door of the library and threw it open.

"Vanrow! General Vanrow!" I shouted.

He met me at the top of the stairs with a revolver in his right hand, and a wine-glass, from which he had been drinking, still in his left.

"Quick—escape!" I screamed. "There is an infernal machine in your library! It is going off! We shall be blown to atoms!"

He had run past me in a moment, and came out of the library with the box in his hand. I stood on the stairs unable to move, petrified by my curiosity to see what he would do.

"Come," he said. "You may help me!"—as he ran into the supper room; and I followed just in time to see him wrench open the case with a carving fork and stop the clockwork with his fingers.

"As far as I can judge, we have won by two minutes," he remarked coolly. "Did you see the thing placed?"

"A man passed me leaving the library window," I answered.

The general turned to a speaking tube near him, and gave a few quickly-spoken orders through it.

"I will go and search the garden," he said to me. "The villains must not escape."

As he left the room, I glanced anxiously round. There was a desk under the window similar to one in the room below, and I searched every drawer of it; they were all empty, however. Then I crossed the room to where the thick curtains shut off a small inner room, and, as I drew them aside, I uttered an exclamation of joy, for lying on a table at the farther end were all the letters which I had seen on the desk in the library.

Vanrow had, as I suspected, carried them upstairs with him. I turned them over quickly with trembling fingers. Yes—there was the blue letter for which I had undergone so much! I seized it eagerly. As I did so the curtains were drawn aside, and, turning at the sound, I found myself, with the letter still in my hand, face to face with the Head of the Police.

"I am afraid he has escaped," he was saying as he entered. "There must be some treachery among my sentries;" and then, as he caught sight of the letter in my hand, he paused.

"That is so, or I should not be here," I said, frankly.

"And now I have to inquire," he began, in a slightly altered tone, "what you were doing so opportunely in my apartments, and how I can reward you for the service you have rendered me?"

He seemed a rather kind man. I saw there would be no good in attempting any but the real explanation of my presence.

"I came to steal this letter," I said, holding it up. "May I claim as my reward the right to burn it unread by you?"

Vanrow raised his eyebrows.

"I assure you on my honour as an English gentleman"—and I drew myself up to the full extent of my sixty-three inches—"that to burn it will harm nobody. The writer wished it unsent almost as soon as it left his hands."

"This is not a personal matter," replied the General, shrugging his shoulders. "My duty to the State——"

"Does not require you to read a letter which the writer wished unsent," I interrupted.

"It is a very hard thing you ask."

"Which gives you the greater pleasure in granting it."

The General smiled, and I held the letter in the flame of one of the candles which stood on the table.

Digitized by Google

A Tight-Rope Romance

"BRAVO! bravo!" shouted the vast assembly, as Saladin, the king of the tight-rope, appeared, graceful and smiling.

Saladin looked down from his giddy height through hazy space upon the mass of upturned faces and drank in the delicious incense of their applause. Then, as the band began to play the prelude of a popular waltz, he ostentatiously blew a kiss towards a box where a little woman, with a scared look in her eyes, sat watching him. She had forebodings—vague forebodings born of ominous dreams—that something terrible would befall that night. So she had told him, and now he blew her a kiss before that great multitude to reassure her.

And yet she was not reassured. Not that she doubted for an instant her lover's sureness of foot or steadiness of head. Only she had seen a face in the stalls and a pair of eyes that had met hers and frightened her. She clutched suddenly at the sleeve of her companion.

"Look," she cried hysterically.

"Yes, dear; what is it?"

"Lord Rider. He is sitting below there."

"Lord Rider?"

"Yes. I jilted him to run away with Saladin. Didn't you know? He'll do something dreadful, I know he will. I must run and tell Saladin. Let me go, Kitty."

The other tried to calm her.

"But I can't bear to look at it, Kitty."

"Then come outside, dear. There's no danger, really; but if you stay here you may scream and frighten him."

And so saying, she took her by the arm and led her gently into the ladies' cloak-room, and made her drink a little brandy.

The rope stretched from end to end of the hall, some eighty feet or so above the floor, and Saladin walked along it, as easily and safely as a man who crosses a plank bridge over a tiny brook. He stood on it on one foot, he knelt on it, he sat astride it. He even crossed it blindfold, with a sack over his head. The multitude gazed at him open-eyed and open-mouthed, and every time he got back to his little platform in mid-air roared tumultuous applause.

"Ladies and gentlemen!" shouted the manager, "we have now arrived at the final item in Saladin's entertainment. Saladin asks me to say that if any member of the audience will intrust himself to his care he is willing to carry him across the tight rope on his back."

There was a great silence, broken presently by the voices of those who pressed the offer on their neighbours. The manager repeated his proposal.

"I can assure you, ladies and gentlemen," he said, "that there is not the slightest danger. If any gentleman will cross the tight rope on Saladin's back, Saladin will absolutely guarantee his safe return."

Again there was a silence, growing gradually to a murmur; and then a long tempest of vociferous cheers as a man in evening dress was seen to rise in his place in the stalls and climb the flight of steps which gave access to the stage.

"Who is he?"

The question passed rapidly from mouth to mouth, and at first none could answer it. But presently a man in the front seats whispered to his neighbour:—

"By Jove! that's Lord Rider; the man whose *fiancée* ran away with Saladin!"

To which the neighbour replied:—"Ugly little brute. I'm not surprised. But what's his game, I wonder? He means mischief of some sort, I'll warrant. What do you think? Oughtn't we to tell the manager to stop it?"

"What's the use? It's not our business. Saladin can stop it himself if he wants to."

So they whispered to each other, while Lord Rider was hoisted, amid ringing rounds of cheers, to the platform where stood the man who had robbed him of his love.

To anyone who knew the story it would have seemed no wonder that the athlete had been preferred to him, even by the woman who wore his engagement ring. He saw all this himself; he had seen it and known it since his rival had come across his path; and the knowledge added both to his bitterness and to his hate.

The eyes of the two men met. It was the first time since the little woman had left her home that Saladin had seen the man whom he had wronged; and they looked at each other long and steadfastly. There were two attendants with them on the platform, and in their presence neither cared to speak the thoughts that were uppermost in his mind. But Saladin's face fell at length before the other's gaze, and fear was visible in his eyes, and he began to stammer out a refusal to go further with this last item of his entertainment.

"If you are afraid," the other whispered beneath his breath—"if you are afraid, it does not matter."

Still Saladin hesitated.

"Very well," the man said. "Now I see that you are a coward."

The word stung Saladin to the quick. He was not used to have his courage questioned; perhaps there were few men whose courage was less questionable. He gripped hold of one of the ropes, by which the platform was suspended, for a moment, while a crowd of thoughts shot through his brain.

"I am no coward. Come!"

And the attendant helped the man on to his back and handed him the balancing-pole, and they passed out together upon the tight rope.

Saladin had no delusions, no false hopes. He knew, though the other whispered no word of his intentions, that he was walking the tight rope for the last time in his life. It surprised him a little that no brutal recriminations were hissed in his ear. He did not understand this silent vengeance.

He regretted nothing. If he could have had his life again he would have done the same with it. What he had done still seemed worth while, even though this was what the doing of it brought him to. And yet it was an awful end!

He was near the platform now and he began to tremble. The balancing pole swayed in his hand. Shiver after shiver ran through his frame. The perspiration broke out in great beads on his forehead. He felt a sudden inclination to break into a run, and dared not.

Already the man on his back had knotted his fingers firmly round his throat. He was only five yards from the platform, and yet he knew that between him and the gaudy, velvet-covered stool lay death!

Saladin thought:

"If only the man would be quick."

The grip of the fingers round his throat tightened. The weight of the man on his back grew heavier.

"He is nerving himself to throw me over," thought the athlete.

At this moment Lord Rider pressed his mouth to the other's ear and whispered:

"This is my triumph!"

Saladin stood still. The waiting throng below sent up a cheer, but he heard nothing. The balancing-pole was steady now.

"You fiend!" he said. "Be quick." And shut his eyes. Nothing happened. He could hardly believe his senses. Then he sprang forward and reached the platform in safety.

Lord Rider had fainted.

POSTAL RATES.

SHORT STORIES will be sent direct from these offices, post free, to any country within the Postal Union, at the following rates, prepaid:—

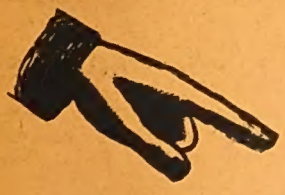
One Year	6s. 6d.
Half Year	3s. 3d.
Three Months	1s. 8d.

Printed and Published by C. ARTHUR PEARSON, at "Pearson's Weekly" Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

A GIFT WORTH £3, AND WATCH, FREE.

THIS is a beautiful "Gladstone," open-face, STOP-WATCH; strong, exquisitely made and finished, gent's size, jewelled, Swiss movement, imitation gold; looks and wears like genuine 18-carat gold. Good enough for millionaires. The best watch ever sold so cheap. Only experts can tell it is not pure gold. I offer it to you from the factory in Switzerland at the lowest price, 16s., as an **experiment,** to learn if money can be saved by *avoiding* shopkeepers, and selling direct to the public at wholesale prices. **This offer will never appear again,** unless a large number of watches are sold from this offer. *Special offer. Good for thirty days only.* Send me only 16s., and promise to show this offer, also watches and Gift to your friends and acquaintances during this entire year, and I will make you a present of a Gift which costs £3 in London, and a beautiful "Rosebery" watch free. These are my special gifts to you, to pay you for the trouble to advertise my watches. This is an honest, *bona fide* offer, and may seem over-liberal only to persons ignorant of my business, and of the fact that £200,000 are expended annually for advertising purposes by many firms. The Gift worth £3 cannot be sent by Parcels Post, but an Order which will promptly secure it for you will be sent with the "Gladstone" and "Rosebery" watches, post paid, to any Lady or Gentleman, on receipt of only 16s. by P.O. Order. **Write quick, to-day!** Money cheerfully returned if not as represented. Address, H. C. DEAN, 36, Great Portland St., London, W.



Delicate Children become Bonny, Chubby, and Strong.

If your children have failing health from any cause, no matter whether they are healthy children but out of health, or are naturally pale, delicate, and thin, do not hesitate, but procure them a Tonic at once, for no time should be lost in improving the general health of delicate children.

The period of childhood calls loudly for strengthening remedies; remember nature is at work building up tissues, developing nerve sensibilities, as well as hardening bony structures. It is, therefore, the only rational treatment; in fact, it is a complete waste of time to give them anything else. Children's ailments when treated tonically yield at once, showing how urgently and terribly needed strengthening remedies are.

Infantina's Syrup is a simple, harmless, pleasant remedy, prepared from pure ingredients of a well-known curative and corrective character. The Hypophosphites of Iron and Lime are delicately united with other tonic and strengthening restoratives. These invaluable Iron and Lime Salts are absolutely essential for the growing tissues, and often health cannot be maintained without them.

Infantina's Syrup forms pure, rich, red blood, and strengthens bony, muscular, and nervous tissues, thus attacking the very root of the delicacy. By its use the appetite increases, flesh is gained, general health augmented, and the whole functions of the body are more energetically performed. Do not forget that consumption, scrofula, anæmia, fits, bow-legs, knock-knees, pigeon-breast, and rickets, as well as other stunted and distorted growths, are entirely due to neglected delicacy in childhood.

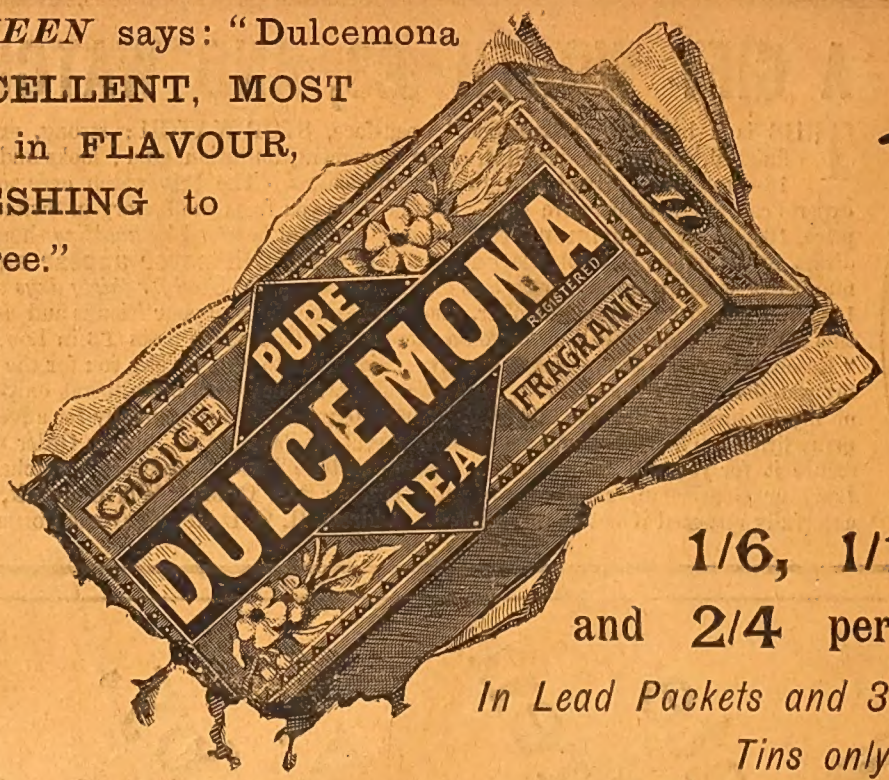
There is no better remedy for the ills and ailments of children from two to fifteen years of age than Infantina's Strengthening Syrup, which changes peevish, pale, delicate children into healthy, happy boys and girls.

Mrs. Hendry, writing from South Shields, states:—"Infantina's Syrup has done my children a world of good; in fact, I should not like to be without it."

Sold by Chemists and Patent Medicine Vendors at 1s. 1½d. per bottle. If you cannot obtain it promptly remit 15 penny stamps to the INFANTINA COMPANY, 6, Sloane Square, London, S.W., and it will be instantly sent post paid. Full instructions accompany each bottle.

Digitized by Google

THE QUEEN says: "Dulcemona Tea is EXCELLENT, MOST DELICATE in FLAVOUR, and REFRESHING to a degree."



1/6, 1/10, 2/-, and 2/4 per Pound,

In Lead Packets and 3 lb. and 5 lb. Tins only.

AGENTS EVERYWHERE—FIRST-CLASS GROCERS. WHOLESALE ONLY: 11 & 11a, UPPER THAMES STREET, LONDON, E.C.

THE SOAP FOR HARD WATER.
LATHERS FREELY in the HARDEST WATER
THE SOAP FOR SOFT WATER.
WATSON'S
MATCHLESS CLEANSER
A HOUSEHOLD REQUISITE
LARGEST SALE OF 1lb TABLETS IN THE WORLD.
THE SOAP FOR HOT WATER
THE SOAP FOR COLD WATER.

Digitized by Google